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CAXTON

PLATE I

THE CAXTON WINDOW IN ST. MARGARET'S, WESTMINSTER

[*Frontispiece*

CAXTON

Mirrour of Fifteenth-Century Letters

A STUDY OF THE LITERATURE OF THE FIRST ENGLISH PRESS

BY

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BOSTON AND NEW YORK
HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY
1926

Printed in Great Britain by
UNWIN BROTHERS, LIMITED, LONDON AND WOKING

TO

MY MOTHER

WHO

"IN MY YOUTHE SETTE ME TO SCHOLE"

. . . sothe it is
That who that al of wysdom wryte
It dulleth ofte a mannes wytte
To hym that shal it alday rede
For thylke cause yf that ye rede
I wol goo the myddel wey
And wryte a book bytwene the twey
Somwhat of luste and somwhat of lore

GOWER, *Confessio Amantis*,
1st edition (Caxton).

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PREFACE

WHY, it may well be asked, another book on Caxton after the great work by William Blades? Is it needed for corrections and the addition of new material? Has not this purpose been accomplished in the volume by E. Gordon Duff, published by the Caxton Club of Chicago in 1905.

In reply let me hasten to state that the present undertaking is no attempt to supersede the work of these men, " whose penner and ynke horne "—to borrow a phrase from Caxton—" I am not worthy to bere " in the field of early printing and bibliography. To be sure a few gleanings have been included which they passed by, and which, I believe, should not be regarded entirely as unconsidered trifles. There is, too, the important discovery of Lieutenant-Colonel Birch in 1923 which, fitted into its proper place, gives satisfactory solution to the vexed question of where Caxton learned the art of printing.

But the object of this study is primarily different from previous ones, which have been concerned mainly with Caxton's work as a printer, bibliographical descriptions of his books, or studies of his language. It is an attempt to study him as author and editor; to examine the works he selected to print, and through them to gain more knowledge of one of the least understood periods of English literature.

Why was the age of Elizabeth not one of a few isolated peaks, but a great range of lofty talents, with a general public not too far below to give immediate reaction and understanding? Surely—to change the figure—no outside influence could produce such general and spontaneous growth. Nor is it reasonable to consider that it sprang to life in one generation. Form, perhaps, and surface effects may have been due to classic models, but substance, themes, habits of thought and motives of action are deeper of origin and slower of growth than such explanation would imply.

For a true understanding of the greatest period in English literature one must go back farther than Erasmus and Sir Thomas More and catch the spirit which with characteristic English deliberation finally allowed itself to be moulded into Renaissance form and types, but without sacrifice of individuality or native quality.

The work of Caxton is of special value in revealing this spirit, since he was little influenced by learning foreign to the ideas in which he lived and thoroughly representative of his time and locality.

So close were his sympathies to the tastes and ideals of Court, Church, and the men of thought with whom he lived, that there could be little profit in trying to render judgment as to whether he followed or led his literary public. The important thing for us is to gain understanding of these ideals and beliefs—and for such understanding the books of Caxton are of the greatest importance.

And one cannot fail to be surprised at the degree of completeness offered by the cross-section of fifteenth-century vernacular literature he put forth. It is almost as if he took representatives of contemporary literary genres as actors in the closing scenes of the great drama of mediæval literature and called them all before his audience to make their bow before the curtain should fall and the stage be re-set for the Reformation and the Renaissance.

In the chapters which follow I hope to reconstruct, or at least suggest, the circle in which Caxton lived, the personalities of his patrons and helpers, and give an idea—as vivid as possible—of the nature and content of the books he printed. In the Appendix will be found a list of reprints of these books, an enumeration of his publications in chronological order, and a reprint of all his prologues, epilogues and significant interpolations.

For the inestimable privilege of working in the British Museum I join with hundreds of my countrymen in gratitude. The constant courtesy and personal kindnesses of the men on the staff with their resourcefulness in helping one over difficulties are not easily forgotten. In my own case special acknowledgment is due to Mr. Arthur Ellis and Dr. Henry Thomas. To the librarian of St. Bride's Institute also, I am grateful for the courteous pains taken to make available the annotations and note-books of William Blades.

To Professor A. W. Pollard, Sir Israel Gollancz, Dr. A. W. Reed, and Mr. Robert Steele I am indebted for valuable suggestions and advice. And to Dean C. M. Gayley I wish to acknowledge special obligation for the encouragement and stimulus of his sympathy and practical assistance.

To these and to all friends and critics may I say with Caxton, " I presente this lytyl book ", which has been made " in the most best wyse that I have coude or myght "? Like him, may I declare " what that is wryton is under correctyon of lerned men ", and ask all readers " to pardone me where I have erryd or made fawte, whyche yf ony be is of ygnoraunce and ageyn my wylle "?

N. S. AURNER.

30 Bedford Place, London.
April 17, 1925.

CAXTON

CHAPTER I

CAXTON AT BRUGES

A marchaunt ther was with a forkid berd.
Canterbury Tales (Caxton's 1st edition).

PERHAPS it was the subconscious echo of this line that led the "biblioclast" John Bagford to invent a picture of Caxton by adding a thick beard to a sixteenth-century portrait of the Italian poet Burchiello.[1] This absurdity was seriously reproduced by the early biographers of Caxton, and still appears on catalogues and in book sales. Time has given it an interest of its own. Like the Ireland forgeries of Shakespeare, it forms a picturesque eddy in the stream of literary history.

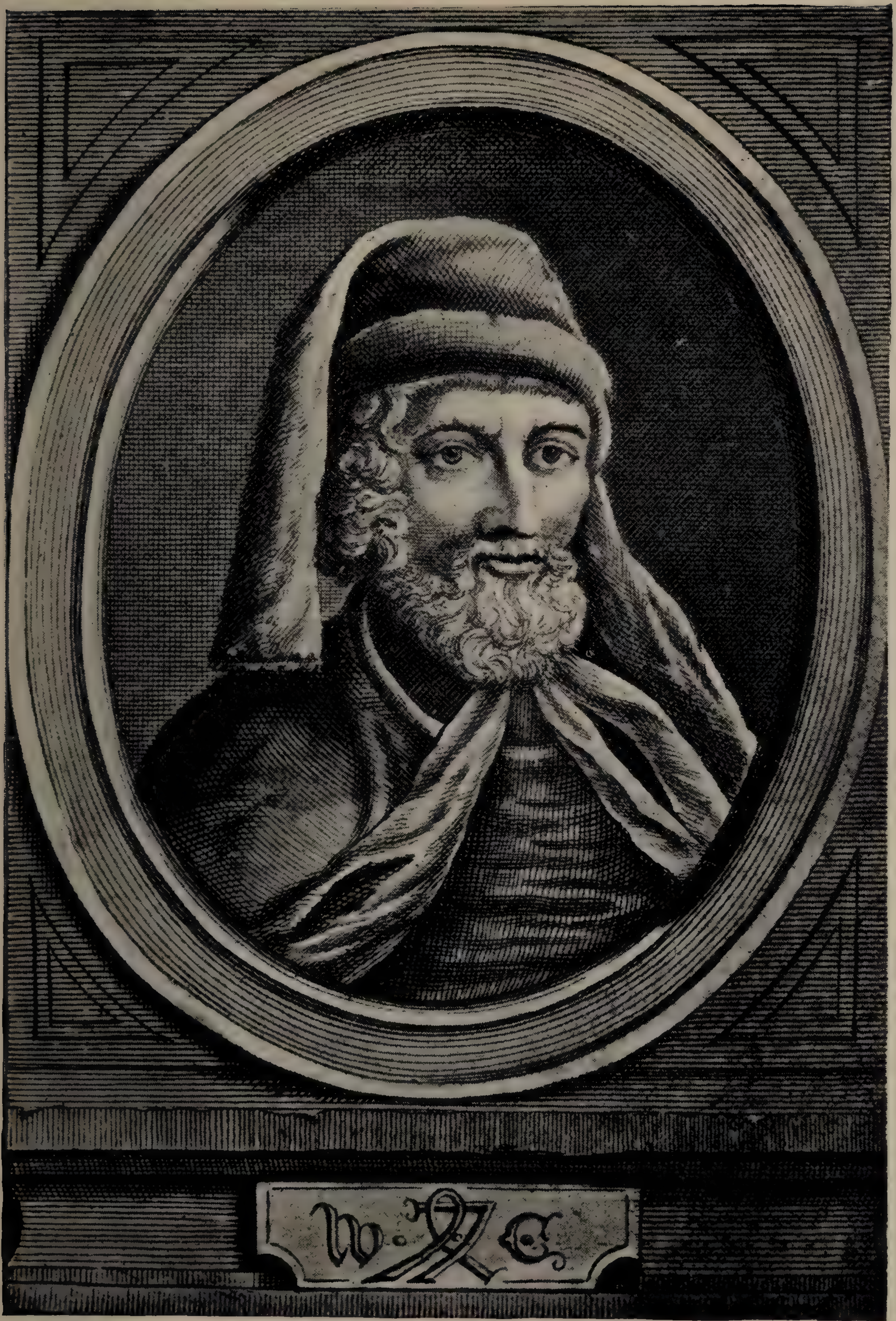
We may be sure from what we know of Caxton that if a beard was considered essential to the dignity of a "grete marchaunt", he wore one. Inference, however, must be the basis of such conviction, for no authentic portrait is known. A manuscript illumination in the *Dictes and Sayengis* at Lambeth Palace has been thought by many to contain one. The picture shows Earl Rivers, with a man kneeling beside him presenting his translation to King Edward IV and the young Prince of Wales. Horace Walpole first engraved this for his *Royal and Noble Authors*, believing that the kneeling figure was Caxton the printer. The recent Garnett and Gosse history of English literature also gives this as a picture of Caxton. But the best authorities on England's first printer—William Blades and E. Gordon Duff—regard this figure as an ecclesiastic, probably Haywarde the scribe.

One other possibility has been pointed out. In the Chatsworth copy of the *Recuyell of the Historyes of Troye* a miniature shows a kneeling man presenting a book to the Duchess of Burgundy.[2] Since Caxton was both translator and printer of the *Recuyell*, and this figure is evidently not an ecclesiastic, it seems probable that the figure is intended for him.

Of his character and standing as a merchant, fortunately, we know much more than of his appearance. One fact alone is sufficient to indicate this: he was Governor of the Merchant Adventurers in Bruges from 1463 to 1469. This period covered the closing years of Philip the Good and the beginning of the reign of Charles the Bold—a period which has been aptly termed the sunset glow of the splendour of Bruges; when the richest sovereign of Europe, who made this city his capital,[3] held there the most splendid Court in Europe. Like Venice, its European rival, it was a city of navigable canals, from whose beautiful stone bridges it derived its name.

A description of fifteenth-century Bruges has been left by the Spanish nobleman Tafur.[4] "This city of Bruges", he says, "is a large and very wealthy city, and one of the greatest markets in the world. It is said that two cities compete with each other for commercial supremacy, Bruges in Flanders in the west and Venice in the east. It seems to me, however, and many agree with my opinion, that there is much more commercial activity in Bruges than in Venice . . . thither repair all the nations of the world . . . at times the number of ships sailing from the harbour of Bruges exceeds seven hundred a day. Goods are

PLATE II



THE CAXTON PORTRAIT INVENTED BY BAGFORD
(*Original* 7.2 × 10.7 *mm.*)

[*Face p.* 18

brought there from England, Germany, Brabant, Holland, Zealand, Burgundy, Picardy, and the greater part of France, and it appears to be the port for all these countries and the market to which they bring their goods in order to sell them to others."

The English Nation—under which name the Merchant Adventurers were known in Bruges—included all the commercial interests of England in this strategic centre. This association was a voluntary one, the result of individual initiative, which by its astonishing growth during the fifteenth century overshadowed the Merchants of the Staple under Government protection, and stimulated that development of town life and civic consciousness which is considered by many the most vital element of English life in this century.[5]

Foreign merchants, living as they must in the midst of suspicion and jealousy, with the laws governing their rights and privileges in a constant state of change, had to keep strongly organized and select their leaders with great care. The members of the English Nation —like the Hanse Merchants, the Florentines, and the rest of the thirty-four kingdoms represented in Bruges —had their own "House".[6] Here lived the governor with his assistants under a discipline as rigid as that of a well-ordered monastery. Celibacy was required, and the governor kept careful watch over the morals of the merchants, with special care to prevent quarrels. Both firmness and tact were necessary to administer successfully the numerous regulations with their restrictions on games, drinking, and hours for being in rooms. So serious was the danger of disputes regarded that restrictions governed the keeping of dogs, and men were not permitted to argue at the table.

The House was headquarters for the interests of all English merchants. New-comers were given information of all kinds: customs, exchange rates, credit of persons to be dealt with. Charters and privileges were guarded, disputes judged, merchants were buried and their property looked after. In fact, it was a combination of Embassy and Consular Service performed by a voluntary association.

Of all nations, Flanders was most closely associated with England's commercial life. The wool trade had for two hundred years joined the financial interests of these two people, so that the man in charge at Bruges may well be considered England's most important foreign representative at this time. Our knowledge of Caxton's preparation for this important post is meagre, but clear in its significance.

From his preface to the *Recuyell* we learn that he was born and received at least his earliest education ("lerned myn englissh") in "kente in the weeld". In the preface to *Charles the Grete* he acknowledges gratitude to his father and mother who "sette" him "to schole", but whether this was in Kent or some other place he does not specify.

The first definite date in his life is 1438. In this year he was apprenticed to Robert Large, mercer in the city of London.[7] From this fact a number of important conclusions may be drawn with reasonable certainty. The Caxton family must have been well-to-do and of considerable dignity, since the mercers were the most important of all the trade gilds, and Robert Large stood so high among them that the following year (1439) he was chosen Mayor of London. Caxton and Large's own son, John, were admitted as apprentices together.

At the time of his admission William must have been about seventeen, since indentures were so arranged that a young man completed his term the year he entered upon his civic majority. For a London apprentice this age was twenty-four. The time required to serve varied from seven to fourteen years, and as later dates in his life show that Caxton was not bound for the longer period, it is evident that he must have been born in 1421 or 1422.

No better training could be given for Caxton's future career than the one provided in such a household as that of Robert Large, one of the richest and most influential members of the most aristocratic and powerful of the London gilds. The apprentices (there were eight, besides two assistants who had completed their term) lived as members of the family with Large and his wife, their four sons and two daughters.[8] In return for the loyal service which the oath of the apprentice bound him to give, the master promised " to feed him, clothe him, and teach him well and truly his art and craft ".

Such teaching in Caxton's case must have carried with it invaluable experiences. Noblemen—even kings—were interested in trade, and had their business agents, whom they consulted frequently in regard to various commissions. Mercers were by no means confined to the wool trade, but dealt in spices and novelties of various kinds, among which were valuable manuscripts.[9] The election of his master as Mayor must have increased greatly the opportunities of the young apprentice for contact with important people and interesting events.

What the experiences may have been which taught this young man, in addition to his trade, prudence, discretion, and a high degree of diplomatic skill, we can only conjecture, but we know some of the public events of those years that were fitted to stir the blood of youth. The great jousts at Smithfield in 1438 lasted for three weeks. In the next year came the dramatic burning on Tower Hill of Richard Wyche, Vicar of Deptford, for the heresy of Lollardism. Two years later saw the trial and condemnation of Roger

Bolingbroke, Thomas Southwell, and Margery Jourdemain (the witch of Eye) for sorcery, with the subsequent hanging and burning; and—most dramatic of all—the public humiliation and penance for the same crime of Eleanor Cobham, Duchess of Gloucester, who for three days in succession, wearing a white sheet and holding a taper, walked barefooted over the stones of London to St. Paul's, while the Mayor, Sheriffs, and crafts of the city accompanied her to emphasize her disgrace.

But the service of Caxton was interrupted by the death of his master in 1441. The will of Robert Large gives evidence of his regard, since he left the young apprentice 20 marks, a sum equivalent (Blades's estimate) to £150. This estimate should, of course, be at least doubled for its present-day value.

It has been generally considered that after the death of Large, Caxton went to Flanders the same year to finish his term under a master appointed by the executors of the will.[10] This opinion is based on the assumption that the prologue to the *Recuyell* was written in 1471, when the translation was finished. There is no special reason, however, why the prologue may not have been written at the same time as the epilogue—that is at the time of the printing, which is placed in 1475.[11] If Caxton's statement that he had been dwelling in Flanders for the space of thirty years is reckoned from the latter date, it is probable that he completed his training in London. This probability is strengthened by a London record, printed in the large *Life* of Blades, but strangely enough ignored in his discussion, showing a small tax (" apparently a house tax " is Blades's comment) paid by William Caxton in 1475.

Caxton began his life as a merchant in the Low Countries, probably at Bruges. By 1450 he was wealthy enough to pledge surety at Bruges for a friend to the amount of £10. Like others who have given such pledge, Caxton was called upon to pay the price, and the document (showing his continued faith in the absent friend) remains to give us one of the few certainties we have of his life.

Three years later he was back in London to receive another symbol of advancement. Records show that in 1453 William Caxton was admitted to the Livery of the Company of Mercers. This distinction, carrying with it special privileges, was by no means conferred upon all who gained the freedom of the gild. The same year he, with a number of others, was fined for not attending the "riding" of the Mayor elected from their company.

By 1463 he had become "Governor of the English Nation beyond the Sea," as letters addressed to him testify.

During the years in which the young apprentice was advancing to this important position great changes had taken place in England. The House of York had displaced that of Lancaster. Edward IV, crowned in 1461, took special interest in the welfare of merchants,—in fact he became a great merchant himself. In the second year of his reign he granted a large charter "to the marchants of England resident especially in the Netherland", delegating full executive power to the man appointed as their governor over all their members and all their interests in "Brabant, Flanders, Henault, Holland, Zeland, and other countreyes beyond the sea". William Obray, the first man appointed, held the office apparently only a few months, for in 1463 Caxton had assumed the duties, which he continued to exercise until 1469.

No situation could have offered better opportunity to gain knowledge of the world and of people. The quays of Bruges were crowded with merchandise of all kinds and people of all races. South Europe and the Orient vied with the North in contributing strange beasts and unusual products. " It was said that strangers used to flock especially to Bruges to see the amazing assembly of goods and merchants, and to pick up the latest news from every corner of the world, which was common property there long before it reached the other cities of Europe." [12]

And it was not the demands of his office in Bruges alone—numerous and complicated as they were—that called for sound judgment and diplomatic skill. His duties required travel through all sections of the Netherlands, and the English Government frequently called upon him to assist in important negotiations, especially with the Court of Burgundy and the Hanse merchants or Easterlings. Records show free passports granted by the city of Utrecht to William Caxton, his servants and goods, for the years 1464, 1465, and 1467. We also catch glimpses of his journeys in references and anecdotes in his prologues and interpolations.[13]

Of Caxton's service as a mediator in the interests of the English Court several records remain. In 1464 King Edward directed his Chancellor to draw up a commission for Richard Whetehill and William Caxton to treat with the Duke of Burgundy for the prorogation of the mercantile treaty about to expire.[14] The efforts of these men were successful in extending the treaty for another year. The matter was to come up for permanent settlement by a diet of lords at St. Omer in 1465, but other affairs prevented this meeting, and the King asked the mercers of London to provide for the continuance of this vital treaty.

The mercers, afraid to assume " a mater of so grete weyghte where that all tymes here to fore the Kyng by thavise of his lords of his Councell have made the pvision ", wrote to Caxton—who like William of Deloraine seems to have been a man "good at need"—begging him to look after the safety of their interests. In some way the intercourse was extended until the King could make further arrangements.

Another letter dated the same year (1465), and headed "Courte of aventurers holden the XVI daye of August", urges their Governor "ovir ye see" to bring about a "refourmacion" of the "evyll mesure of cloth and lawne" sent them from abroad. The next year the Duke of Clarence wrote asking him to look after the strict enforcement of Parliamentary Acts passed in retaliation for Burgundian restrictions on English traders. These few documents preserving references to his work give brief glimpses of what must have been a crowded panorama of activities, ranging from petty details to diplomacy of high importance.

The death of Philip the Good in 1467 and the marriage (which took place the next year) of his successor Charles to Margaret, sister of Edward IV, brought about better business relations between England and Burgundy. The English King sent an embassy (1468) to the Duke of Burgundy to treat for the "enlarging of woolen cloth in his dominions". The men appointed were William Redeknape, John Pykering, and William Caxton.[15]

The last references to Caxton as Governor occur in 1469. In May of this year he was asked to act with one Thomas Perrot as arbitrator in a dispute between a Genoese and an English merchant. Since Caxton could not be in Bruges at the time, the decision was rendered by a full court of merchants in the name of the two merchants. In August of this year, also, Caxton's name is on a list of dignitaries, to whom *vins d'honneur* were distributed.

It is not certain whether this last-mentioned distinction was conferred upon him as Governor, since either at this time, or very soon after, he entered the service of the young Duchess of Burgundy. The reason—or reasons—for this important step can only be conjectured, but several suggest themselves as probable.

About this time he must have married, for in 1496 a decree of separation was granted to Gerard Croppe, merchant taylor, and his wife Elizabeth, daughter of William Caxton. As we have seen, marriage was not possible under the restrictions of life in the office of Governor. What more natural for a man of forty-seven who had received all the honours his calling in life could offer, and who, presumably, had amassed a comfortable fortune, than to seek relief from the burden of administrative detail and establish a home of his own?

Another motive evidently helped to bring about this change. From numerous remarks in his own writings it is clear that Caxton always " had grete pleasyr and delyte " in the reading of " strange and mervayllous historyes". No place could have offered more encouragement to such taste than Bruges in the later years of Duke Philip. A magnificent patron of arts and letters, he not only gave rich rewards to authors who dedicated works to him, but he kept constantly employed large numbers of talented writers and artists. Jean Mielot, Raoul Lefevre, and artists like the van Eycks, Roger van der Weyden, and Memling suggest the high character of the men who enjoyed his protection.

Coming of a race of book lovers and collectors, he so added to the treasures he had inherited that no library in Europe was more famous than his. David Aubert, a distinguished scribe of that period, wrote of him: " In order to be provided with a library superior to all others he has from early youth kept in his employ many translators, great clerks, expert orators, historians, and writers labouring diligently in various countries, so that to-day (1457) he is without reservation the prince in all Christendom who has the richest and most genuine library."[16]

Among his courtiers who shared his tastes was Louis de Bruges, Seigneur de la Gruthuyse. Famous for his gallantry in joust and tournament, loyal to the House of Burgundy, and faithful friend to the House of York, this nobleman was excelled only by his sovereign as a patron of letters, and his library was one of the finest in Europe.[17] Familiarity with these great collections of books and frequent intercourse with the makers and sellers of them must have quickened Caxton's natural love for reading, and the fact that so much of the literature he loved did not exist in English made him eager to turn his personal tastes into patriotic service by translating some of these " dyverce bokes " so that they might " be had as well in the Royame of England as in other landes ".

From his prologue we know that he had begun to translate Raoul Lefevre's *Recueil des Histoires de Troyes* in 1469, perhaps before he entered the service of the Duchess. Possibly the greater leisure giving opportunity for such work was one of his reasons for leaving the honourable but exacting office of Governor.

His position in the household of the Duchess Margaret is not known. This youthful sister of Edward IV [18], whose marriage called forth one of the most famous of those magnificent feasts for which Burgundy was renowned,[19] was apparently well fitted to become first lady even at the Court of Burgundy. Like her royal brother, she was keenly interested in business ventures, and took full advantage of the special privileges that he granted her in the English markets.

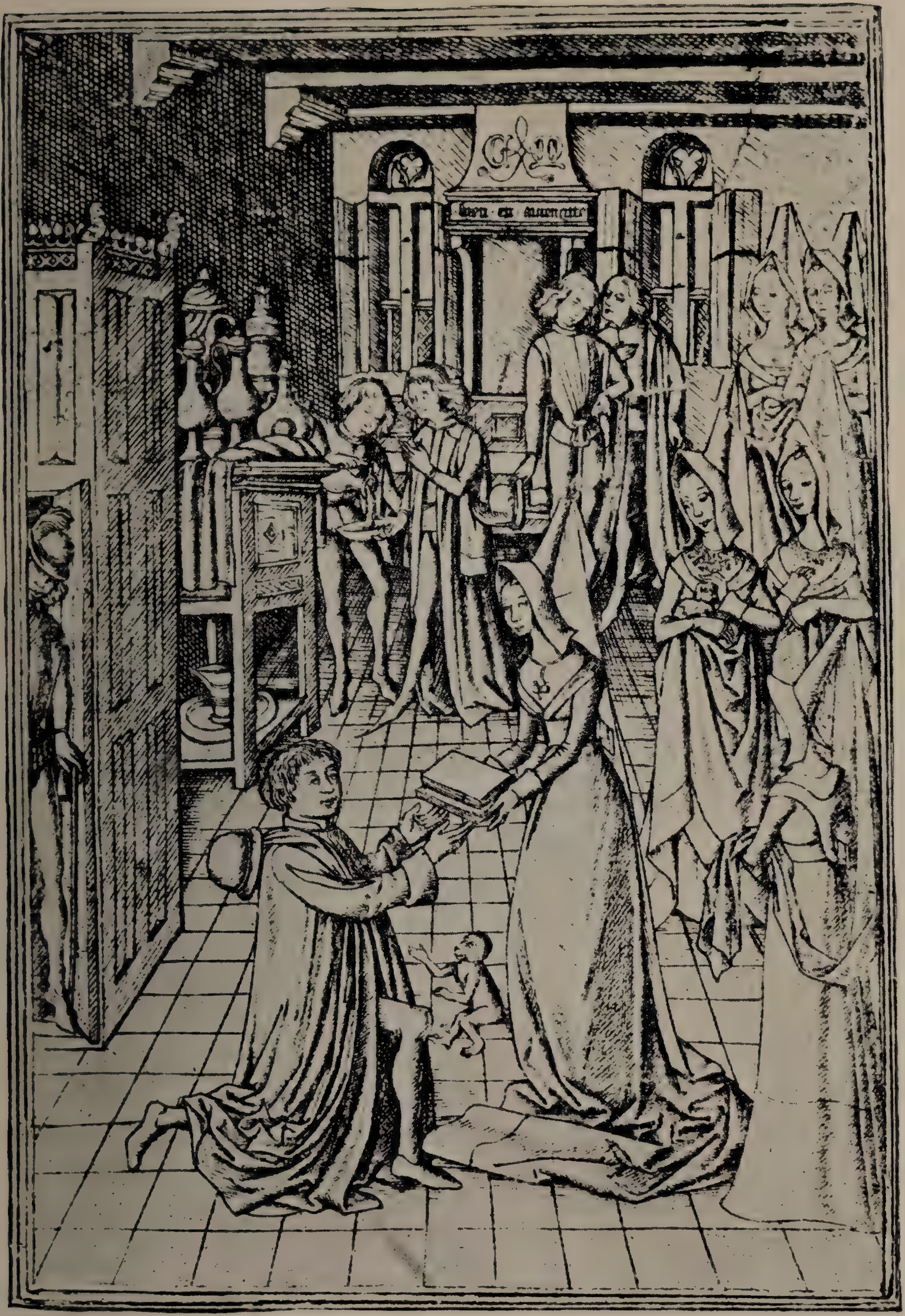
As mistress of various cities, she travelled often from one to the other and did a great deal of building and reconstructing. She had dwellings at Malines, Binche, Mons, Termonde, Antwerp, and Louvain. She was a great benefactress of religious foundations, and in these, too, she assisted and directed building operations. She encouraged learning, and took pains to support letters, as evidenced by her libraries at Malines and at Binche. A number of manuscripts made for her still exist in the Royal Collection at Brussels.[20]

In the service of this " redoubtyd lady" Caxton probably found scope for his wide experience in business and affairs, but found also opportunity to give practical expression to his love for letters. He relates in the prologue to his first book how, after he had written " fyve or six quayers " of his translation, he " fyll in dispayr," and would have given it up had not " my lady Margarete," hearing him speak of it, asked to see his work. Evidently she was pleased both with the plan and his beginning of it, for, in spite of the " defautes ", which she corrected, she commanded him to complete the work.

Within the next five years Caxton translated not only this long romance, but the moralized *Game and Playe of the Chesse*, and—perhaps—the romance of *Jason*. He also became once more an apprentice; at least he " practysed and lerned at my grete charge and dispense " all the processes that were involved in the new invention of printing. Then, in partnership with Colard Mansion, he set up a press in Bruges. On this press they printed the first two books translated by Caxton, the original French form of Caxton's *Recuyell* and *Jason*, and *Meditations sur les Sept Pseaulmes*.

Where Caxton learned the art of printing is a question that has caused warm discussion. Blades always maintained that Wynkyn de Worde was wrong in his statement that it was in Cologne, on an edition of *Bartholomæus*, but a discovery announced by Lieutenant-Colonel J. G. Birch in 1923 shows that Caxton's

PLATE III



AN AUTHOR PRESENTING HIS BOOK TO THE DUCHESS OF BURGUNDY

[*Face p.* 28

assistant was undoubtedly right.[21] In the register of aliens at Cologne four entries of permission are recorded as given to William Caxton to reside in the city for successive periods extending from July 17, 1471, to the close of 1472. This is manifestly the period during which he learned the new art, and taken in connection with the assertion of Wynkyn de Worde and the fact that there is an undated edition of *Bartholomæus* that was printed at Cologne about this time, there can remain no reasonable doubt that Caxton learned his art from the unknown printer of *Flores Augustini*, and perfected himself in the skill required in the various operations by putting them into actual practice on the Latin edition of that extensive work *Bartholomæus de proprietatibus rerum*.[22]

It is clear that the literary work of Caxton grew increasingly important. By the time his translation of the Troy book was finished he had promised so many copies to "dyverce gentilmen" and "frendes" that learning the art of printing seemed the only practical method of keeping his promise. And progress in this new field brought him more and more into close relations with the House of York and prominent Englishmen devoted to their cause.

Edward IV, made a fugitive from England in the autumn of 1470 through the reconciliation of Warwick and Margaret of Anjou, was rescued from corsairs and given hospitality by Louis de Bruges. This chivalrous seigneur entertained both the King and his brother-in-law, Lord Rivers, offering them all the aid in his power, even to the point of returning with them and helping to regain the kingdom. Edward, who successfully returned to England early the next year, was not ungrateful, for he made the Lord of Gruthuyse Count of Winchester and bestowed on him grants of property sufficient to support the title.

Without doubt it was the compulsory leisure among the magnificent volumes in the library of Louis de Bruges that stimulated Edward—who is not remembered as pre-eminently a literary sovereign—to the making of his own library, which became the nucleus of the priceless collection now classified as " Royal " in the British Museum. It is possible also that Caxton made the personal acquaintance of the King during these months, although here, too, we have nothing but probability to support such conjecture.

At any rate, King Edward did not cease to call upon the retired Governor to perform tasks in the interest of England. In September of 1475, William Caxton, with William Dollyng, notary, was commissioned to make the exchange of documents which brought to a conclusion the long controversy with the Hanse merchants which had formed one of the most vexing of Edward's diplomatic problems.[23]

In December of the same year, Caxton was also called upon to assist an embassy sent by King Edward [24] to obtain from Duke Charles a new agreement in regard to the rate of exchange between England and Burgundy.

By this time the translations of the *Recuyell of the Historyes of Troye* and the *Game and Playe of the Chesse* must have been printed. An added link with the House of York had been forged by the dedication of the latter to George, now Earl of Warwick as well as Duke of Clarence, who was generally recognized as the favourite brother of the Duchess of Burgundy. Perhaps the " noble protection " of this new patron may have been one of the things that encouraged the merchant printer to set up a press in England.

Whatever may have furnished the motive—business instinct, patriotic desire to furnish his own country with the new stimulus to mental activity that was stirring other lands, or the call of family and friends

—Caxton was now preparing to leave the country in which he had spent more than thirty years, and to which, so far as we know, he never returned. Henceforth the glory of Bruges and the splendour of the Burgundian Court would be to him but a memory,—as to us it is but a tradition.[25]

NOTES

1 Blades : *Biography and Typography of William Caxton*, p. 91.

2. Reproduced as frontispiece in De Ricci's *Census of Caxtons*. See also A. W. Pollard : "Recent Caxtonia" in *The Library*, 2nd Series, No. 24, vol. vi, October, 1905.

3. E. Gilliat-Smith : *The Story of Bruges*. Dent (*Med. Towns*), 1909.

4. The journal of his travels was printed at Madrid in 1874. His notes on Bruges are translated by Malcolm Letts : *Bruges and Its Past*, 1924.

5. Mrs. J. R. Green : *Town Life in the Fifteenth Century*, 2 vols.

6. A picture of it, preserved in Sanderus : *Flandria Illustrata*, is reproduced in Blades : *Biog.*, p. 22. It was situated at the north-west corner of the Rue Anglaise and Rue St. Jean (Letts : *Bruges*).

7. Mercers' records. Warden's accounts for years 1437–8 (reproduced by Blades).

8. The house, large and imposing, was in the heart of business London at the corner of Old Jewry and Lothbury. Stow (1598) describes it as "sometime a Jews' Synagogue, since a house of friars, then a nobleman's house, after that a merchant's house wherein mayoralties have been kept, but now a wine tavern."

9. William Herbert : *History of Twelve Great Livery Companies*, 1837.

10. Blades : *Biog.*, p. 14.

11. Duff : *William Caxton*, 1905.

12. Letts : *Bruges*.

13. The preface to the *Recuyell* tells us he began his translation in Bruges, continued it in Ghent, and finished it in Cologne. In the prologue to *Jason* he describes what he has seen "depeynted" in Duke Philip's castle of Hesdin. Anecdotes interpolated in the *Golden Legend* recount observations made in Antwerp, and give passages from conversation with the good knight Sir John Capons, while riding from Ghent to Brussels (see Appendix).

14. Warrants under the Signet, file 1379. Rymer, XI, 536 (quoted by C. L. Scofield : *Edward IV*, vol. i, p. 356).

15. Redeknape was one of the London merchants who had complained of "lak of mesure" in the cloth imported from Flanders. Pykering succeeded Caxton as Governor of the English Nation at Bruges.

16. Barrois (Preface), p. iv, *n.* 2.

17. Van Praet: *Recherches sur Louis de Bruges*; also Paulin Paris: *MSS. Français de la Biblio. du Roi.* Colard Mansion, Caxton's partner in the press at Bruges, was under the direct patronage of Louis de Bruges. Blades has pointed out that all the books translated by Caxton may be found in the catalogues of these two libraries.

18. She was twenty-one at the time of her marriage, just a little older than her daughter-in-law, Marie of Burgundy. Between these two young women the warmest friendship continued until it was broken by the death of the latter.

19. This was a combination of triumphal entry, pageants, tournaments, and jousts lasting through a long series of days, with banquets enlivened by conceits, and ingenious mechanical devices. Descriptions of this occasion may be found in Olivier de la Marche: *Mémoires*; also in *Excerpta Historica*, London, 1831.

20. L. Galesloot: *Marguerite d'York*, Bruges, 1879.

21. *The Library*, vol. iv, p. 50.

22. It should be remembered that the work of early printers included many operations now looked after by specialists: casting of types, making of inks, bookbinding, etc.

23. Scofield, *Edward IV*, vol. ii, p. 83.

24. Dr. John Morton, Sir Thos. Montgomery, and Wm. Hatclyf. Scofield: *Edward IV*, vol. ii, p. 107.

25. Mr. H. R. Plomer, in a new biography of Caxton which did not appear in time to be made use of in the present work, has called attention to a hitherto unnoticed item in the Public Record Office (close Roll 304, m. 25, December 11, 1453)—his assignment of his property to trustees during his visits to England in 1453 (see Plomer: *William Caxton*, p. 33).

Another item that I have seen nowhere mentioned is entered in the Calendar of Patent Rolls, 12 Edward IV, Pt. I, m. 18:

"1472, March 8. Westminster. General pardon to William Caxton of the city of London, 'mercier', of all offences committed by him before 4 March."

These items probably indicate provisions against difficulty from legal technicalities in pursuance of Caxton's business affairs.

CHAPTER II

AT THE SIGN OF THE RED PALE IN WESTMINSTER

Bokes to cheryssh and make in sondry wyse;
Vertue to folowe and idlenesse to dispyse.[1]

NO phrase is more characteristic of Caxton than one which occurs at the beginning of his first preface, and is echoed in varying forms throughout all his writings, " to eschewe slouthe and ydlenes ". Judging from his own words and taking them literally, one might think that he really had " no grete charge of ocupacion ", and was in imminent danger of becoming a mere social parasite, but nothing could be further from the facts which are known of his life.

At the very entrance of his career in Westminster we are met with the difficulty of his being apparently in two places at the same time. Mr. Gordon Duff states that he returned to England in 1476 " and took up his residence in the precincts of Westminster Abbey, at a house with the sign of the 'Red Pale' in the 'almonesrye' ".[2] This date for his return seems justified by the Abbey record of a year's rent (ten shillings) paid by Caxton for the period from September 29, 1476, to September 29, 1477.

On the other hand, Miss Scofield maintains that " he was not yet in England on December 2, 1476, as on that day letters of protection of one year's duration were issued to 'William Caxton, late of London, mercer, otherwise called William Caxston, of London, merchant, who was serving the king in the retinue of Lord Hastings, lieutenant of Calais, for the safe custody, victualling, and defence of the town and marches of Calais ' ".[3]

Whatever may have been the precise date of his coming to Westminster, it is clear from the two documents referred to above that Caxton was still making use of his business ability in the King's service, while looking after the many details involved in establishing the first printing-press in England.

Two other points in relation to this first press have caused much speculation: why did Caxton choose Westminster rather than London (where he had friends and an established citizenship), and just where in Westminster was this press ?

On the latter point conjecture is no longer needed, since a careful study of records shows the location with approximate definiteness to have been in Tothill Street, a little west of what is at present the Thistle Tea Room.[4]

Reasons of varying natures have been suggested in answer to the first query. John Stow, the earliest writer to give information, said: " Near unto this house (almshouse founded by Henry VII) westward was an old chappel of S. Anne, over against the which the Lady Margaret, mother to King Henry the 7, erected an Almeshouse for poore women . . . the place wherein this chappell and Almeshouse standeth was called the Elemosinary or Almonry, now corruptly the Ambrey, for that the Almes of the Abbey were there distributed to the poore. And therein Islip, Abbot of Westminster, erected the first Presse of booke printing that ever was in England about the yeare of Christ 1471. William Caxton, citizen of London, mercer, brought it into England, and was the first that practised it in the sayde Abbey."

The suggestion made by Stow that Caxton came on the invitation of Abbot Islip, who erected a press for him, is impossible—as Blades points out—for the Abbot during the whole period of Caxton's life as a printer was John Esteney (1474–1498). John Islip did not become Abbot of Westminster until 1500.

Duff—influenced perhaps by Stow's reference to Lady Margaret's connection with the Almonry—thought that since Lady Margaret was an acknowledged patroness of Caxton, she may have been instrumental in leading him to settle there. This seems hardly probable, since she became a resident of London only upon her third marriage, in 1482, to Lord Stanley, which brought her to live in Derby House; and there is no evidence to connect her with Caxton until his reference to her in *Blanchardyn and Eglantine*, printed in 1489.

Others have believed that he came to be near his parents in their old age, since in 1478 the records of St. Margaret's show that a William Caxton was buried in this parish.

Certainly this location brought him close to the Court, in which were numbered many of his patrons, placed him at the very heart of those ecclesiastical interests which were to furnish so large a proportion of his work, and by no means broke his association with the gild of which he was a member.

The neighbourhood of the Abbey was one of the most important centres for merchants of the staple and dealers in wool. The Abbots of Westminster were themselves great wool merchants. Stow says six wool-houses in the staple were granted them by Henry VI. Many of the fellowship of mercers belonged, as did Caxton, to the Fraternity of Our Blessed Lady's Assumption and "kept a dinner" (of very generous proportions, to judge from the expense accounts remaining) at intervals—probably determined by the great wool fairs—in "The Greyhound," one of the buildings rented by the Mercers' Company from the Abbots of Westminster.

It seems not unlikely that Caxton brought with him assistants from the Netherlands. The name of one youth who probably accompanied him to England[5] is inseparably connected with that of England's first printer. Wynkyn de Worde (Blades quotes fifteen different ways in which he spelled his name, and says that even this list is not complete) was a native of Alsace (Worth), but married an Englishwoman, whose name, Elizabeth, occurs in the records of Westminster as a holder of property, which her husband could not be, since he was an alien. The fact that Wynkyn de Worde inherited his master's business equipment and carried on his work has been generally taken to indicate that Caxton had no son.

Among others who have been suggested as Caxton's assistants are Richard Pynson and Robert Copland. The latter, in his preface to *King Apolyn of Tyre*, speaks of following gladly the example of "my mayster Caxton". As to Pynson, he also refers to Caxton as "my worshipful master", but such expressions—lacking other evidence—cannot safely be construed as signifying more than deep respect. Machlinia and Lettou have also been considered as sometime assistants in the workshop of the Red Pale, but the only basis—which is no basis at all—for such a claim is that they were printing in London and at Holborn before the death of Caxton.

Of his early patrons in London the one who probably did most to ensure his success was Anthony Woodville, Lord Rivers, brother to Elizabeth, Edward's Queen. Like a belated wanderer from the fellowship of the Round Table he stands out, in the phrase of Commines, "un tres gentil chevalier" among the rough and easily forsworn fighters of the Wars of the

Roses. Given by tradition the title of "the handsomest man living",[6] he is also called by one of the most important authorities for that period "the noblest and most accomplished of all Richard III's victims".[7] Sir Thomas More referred to him as "a right honorable man, as valiante of hande as politik in counsayle".

One of the most picturesque passages that we have remaining from this period is Lord Rivers's own description of an April day at Court in 1465, when he was speaking to the Queen, his sister, kneeling before her with his bonnet doffed. Suddenly he was surrounded by the ladies of the Court, who clasped upon his thigh a collar of gold and pearls with "a noble flower of souvenance enameled and in manner of an emprise". At the same time they dropped into his bonnet a little roll of parchment tied with a thread of gold.

Chosen thus as champion by the ladies of England, with the consent of the King, he sent a challenge to Anthony, the famous Bastard of Burgundy, who was one of the most renowned jousters in Europe, to meet him at London in a two days' encounter; one day with spears and swords on horseback, and the second with axes, spears, and daggers on foot. The challenge was accepted—although on account of political complications the meeting did not take place for two years—and the great jousts at Smithfield, a spectacle of international renown, were presided over on June 11 and 12, 1467, by King Edward, who intervened just in time to prevent the humiliation of the champion of Burgundy.[8]

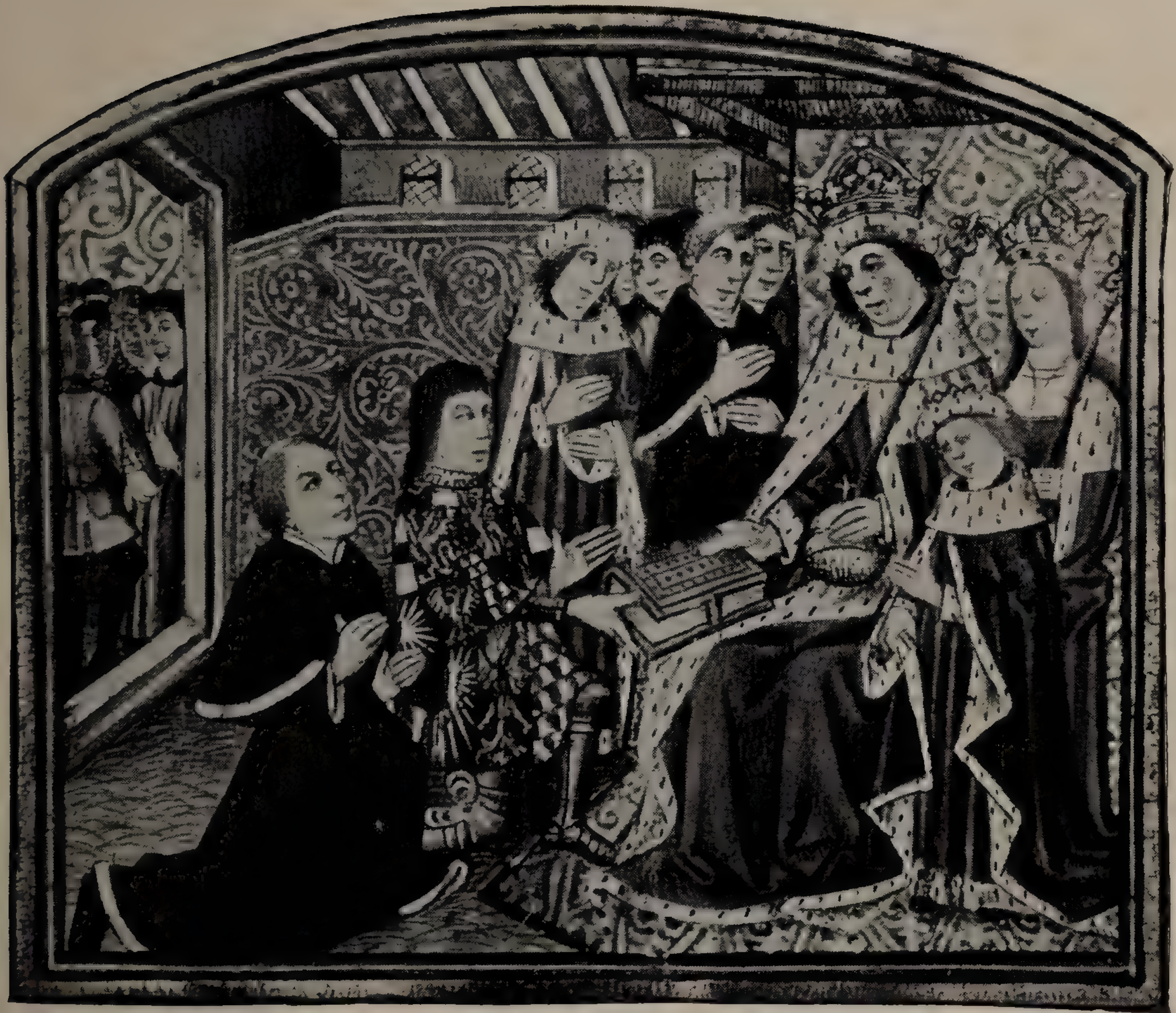
Again, at the wedding celebration of Margaret of York in Bruges, Lord Rivers "did his devoir" in the nine-day tournament of *l'arbre d'or* by breaking eleven lances.

And it was not alone for the honour of fair ladies that he was eager to use his sword. After helping to restore Edward to his throne in 1471, he incurred the displeasure of his royal brother-in-law by urgently requesting permission to go on a crusade against the Saracens. Although the consent, at first angrily refused, was finally given, for some reason Rivers remained in England. But his zeal to fight in the cause of religion had cost him the office of Lieutenant of Calais. Lord Hastings—under whom Caxton served just before he began to print the translations of Rivers—was appointed in his place with a consequent enmity between the two men that developed into a bitter feud between Hastings and the Woodville family.

Appointed first as one of the guardians and later as Governor of the Prince of Wales, Lord Rivers was permitted to go on a series of pilgrimages. His travels included Santiago in Spain and various shrines in Italy. It is his zeal thus shown in the cause of religion and " the noble & meritorious dede " of translating good books for the " ghostly helpe " of others that Caxton stresses in his eulogy of this " noble and vertuouse lord " at the close of his edition of *Cordyale*.

On November 18, 1477, appeared the first English book printed with a date, and (though it may have been preceded by some of the " small pamphletes " later referred to by Copland) the first book definitely known to have been printed in England. This was Lord Rivers' translation of *Les dits moraux des philosophes*, which—he explains in his preface—was given him on the pilgrimage to Compostella, and which seems to have turned his mind definitely from earlier interests to the zealous pursuit of literature, particularly literature of an ethical or religious type. But even here he did not renounce his allegiance to fair ladies, as Caxton's apt raillery reveals in his apparently puzzled search for the reason why " the sayde lord "

PLATE IV



LORD RIVERS PRESENTING A BOOK TO EDWARD IV

MS. Lambeth 265, *Lambeth Palace*
(*Exact size*)

[*Face p.* 38

omitted certain sayings of Socrates "towchyng women".

The account of his literary work given by Caxton includes a translation of the *Dictes*, the *Proverbs of Christyne*, the *Cordyale*, and "diverse balades ayenst the seven dedely synnes". All of these but the ballades Caxton printed before the close of 1479. Evidently he was satisfied with the support given by his noble patron, for he alludes warmly to "the manifolde benefetes and large rewardes of hym had and receyved".

Another influential man of the Court who probably assisted Caxton in these first years was John Russell, Bishop of Rochester in 1476, and later (1480) Bishop of Lincoln and (1483–1485) Chancellor of England. Without doubt he had formed the acquaintance of Caxton on some of his numerous embassies to the Court of Burgundy. Of these, the most important, so far as concerned his personal prestige, was in 1470, when he served as official orator representing Edward IV on the brilliant occasion of investing the Duke of Burgundy with the insignia of the Order of the Garter. This oration—in Latin as it was delivered—was printed by Caxton among the earliest of the books published in England.

Shortly before Charles of Burgundy was made a Knight of the Garter Edward IV had been received into the Burgundian Order of the Golden Fleece. This order, although recently founded,[9] rivalled in the splendour of its ceremonies and the importance of its membership the older Order of the Garter. As to its name, some maintained that it was religious in significance, referring to the fleece of Gideon, but there is little doubt that it was popularly understood as suggesting the exploit of Jason. In fact, one anecdote accounting for the choice of name relates that after long weeks of discussion, in despair of agreeing, someone called attention to the initials of the months which they had spent in consideration of the new project: July, August, September, October, November. The name thus formed—Jason—taken in connection with the great importance of their wool trade, made them agree "hilariously" upon "The Golden Fleece".

Perhaps it was not with the purpose of flattering the English King because of his membership in this powerful foreign order that Caxton addressed to him the translation of Raoul Lefevre's *Jason*, but it was a diplomatic and a graceful thing to do. And it was delicately done too, for he took care to make clear that while he published the translation under the protection of "the most hyghe puissant & crysten kyng", he did not venture to present it to him, because he probably had it in French, "which he wel understandeth", but with the permission of the king and the "most excellent princesse" the queen he presented it to the young Prince of Wales "to thentente that he may begynne to lerne rede English". The book thus bespeaking the good will of the royal family is not dated, but probably was printed the same year as the *Dictes*, 1477.

Under the date of June 15, 1479, the issue roll of the exchequer shows £20 paid to William Caxton by command of the king "for certain causes and matters performed by him for the said Lord the King". Blades says of this account: "Was this for assistance to Edward IV and his retinue when fugitives at Bruges? Or was it in some way connected with the introduction of printing to England?" Had Blades known of Caxton's service in the "victualing and defence" of Calais and its marches he must also have considered this as an alternative in his suggestions to help "the reader . . . choose his own solution".

Other books to a considerable number were printed before 1480. Among the "small pamphletes" were the *Book of Courtesy*, Lydgate's *Stans puer ad mensam*, *Temple of Glass*, *The Horse, the Sheep and the Goose* (two issues), *The Churl and the Bird*, Chaucer's *Queen Anelida and the False Arcyte*, *The Temple of Brass*, and Benedict Burgh's versified *Cato parvus et magnus* (two editions). Larger volumes were *Bœthius* and *The Canterbury Tales.* In Latin were the *Nova Rhetorica* (Margarita eloquentiæ), the *Horæ ad usum Sarum*, the *Infancia Salvatoris*, and the *Ordinale secundum usum Sarum.*

This *Sarum Ordinale*, commonly called the *Pica* or *Pye*, was a book explaining the occurrence of Church festivals and how to adapt the calendar to the service for each week according to the thirty-five varieties of the almanac—a very complicated process. In order to call attention to the fact that this important aid to all those officiating in Church services might be obtained cheaply at the new printing shop, Caxton struck off the first printed advertisement in England :—

" If it plese ony man spirituel or temporel to bye ony pyes of two and thre comemoracions of salisburi use empryntid after the forme of this present lettre whiche ben wel and truly correct, late hym come to westmonester in to the almonesrye at the reed pale and he shal have them good chepe.

Supplico stet cedula."

Caxton must very quickly have gained a circle of friends and considerable patronage among the ecclesiastical dignitaries of Westminster. Of his relations with the Abbot, John Esteney, we know little, but that he had respect for the printer's ability is shown from Caxton's statement in the preface to *Eneydos*, " my lord abbot of westmynster ded do shewe to me late certayn evydenses wryton in olde englysshe for to reduce it in to our englysshe now usid ".

Benedict Burgh, whose versification of Cato's distichs was one of Caxton's earliest and most frequently reprinted books, became Canon of St. Stephen's, Westminster, in 1476, and held this office until his death in 1483. He was tutor to the son of Henry Bourchier, Earl of Essex, and seems to have been advised and befriended in his literary work by Lydgate.

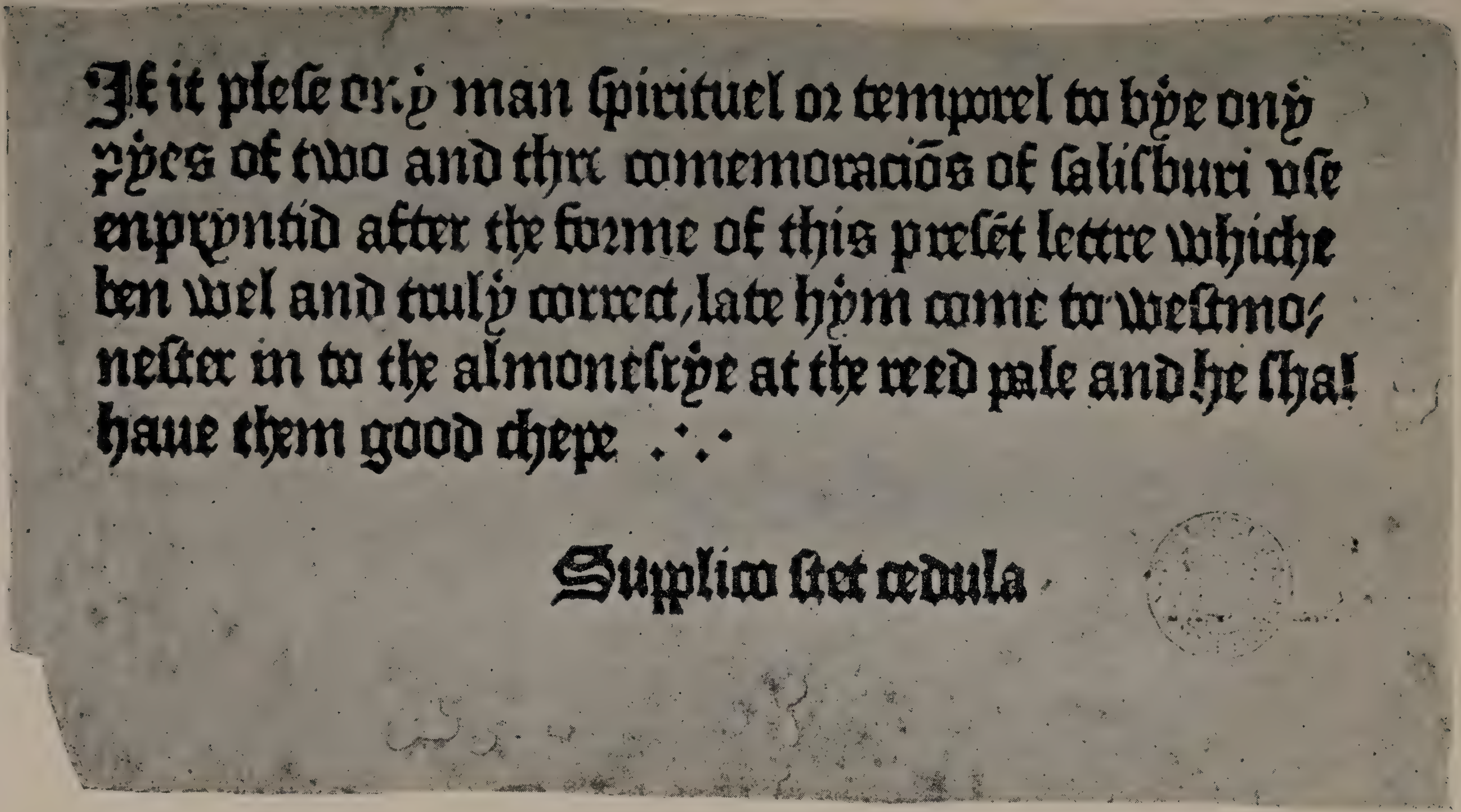
The year 1480 marked many changes both in the form and character of books issued from the Red Pale. A rival printer (John Lettou) began work in London with a smaller and neater type—a fact which may have influenced Caxton to adopt the new fount of type which he now began using. About this time also he began the use of printed signatures and illustrations.

In this year came to England John Kendall, "Turcopolier", or general of infantry to the Knights of St. John, to raise money to assist his Order in saving the fortress of Rhodes from the Turks, who were besieging the island. He had been given power to act for the Grand Master in Italy, England, Flanders, Ireland, and all were commanded to help him. The Pope had empowered him to grant indulgences for the purpose of raising the funds needed to protect Christendom from the common enemy. These indulgences were made out in two forms: one for individuals (singular issue), and the others for families or groups (plural issue). Many of these must have been sold, for they were printed both by Caxton and Lettou.

The next year the papal collector, John Giglis, was also allowed by the English king to seek aid against the Turks, and two issues of indulgences granted by him were printed by Caxton.

Evidently the printer had been greatly stirred by these appeals, for it was in this year (1481) that he printed and presented to the king his translation of

PLATE V



If it pleſe ony man ſpirituel or temporel to bẏe onẏ
pẏes of two and thre comemoraciōs of ſaliſburi vſe
enpryntid after the forme of this preſēt lettre whiche
ben wel and trulẏ correct, late hẏm come to weſtmoneſter
in to the almoneſrẏe at the reed pale and he ſhal
haue them good chepe ∴

Supplico ſtet cedula

CAXTON'S ADVERTISEMENT

[*Face p.* 42

Godefroy of Boloyne " to thende that every cristen man may be the better encoraged tenterprise warre for the defense of Christendom ".

But the intrigues of western Europe were too complicated, and the ambitions of the various rulers too personal to permit any unity of action. Again (probably in 1483) an effort was made to impress the need of united Christian action against the Turk by publishing the correspondence of the Pope with the Venetians, urging them to make peace for this purpose.[10]

The editor of this collection of letters was Peter Carmelianus, who must have belonged to the circle of Caxton's friends and supporters. Born in Brescia, he came to England in the reign of Edward IV and remained there until his death in 1527. On the strength of a pension from Henry VII he was styled poet laureate, but his poems are of little literary significance. He was appointed Latin secretary and one of the chaplains of Henry VII. Henry VIII made him the king's lute player with an annuity of forty pounds.

During the period between 1480 and the death of Edward in 1483, Caxton published his series of historical works: the *Chronicles of England* (two editions), the *Description of Britain*, and the *Polichronicon*; a third edition of Benedict Burgh's *Cato*, the allegorical poem *The Court of Sapience*, three Latin service books, his own translation of the *Mirrour of the World*, *Reynard the Fox*, and the *French-English Vocabulary*; and an English version of Cicero's *Old Age* and *Friendship*.

As for the translators of this last work, he tells us the *Old Age* was turned into English at the request of Sir John Fastolf, and the *Friendship* (together with a fifteenth-century treatise, *Noblesse*) was translated by John Tiptoft, Earl of Worcester. To both these men he devotes passages of warm praise for their love of learning and their personal services to England. But the biographers of Caxton, who state that these men were patrons of Caxton in his work as a printer, entirely disregard dates, for Sir John Fastolf died about 1459, and the Earl of Worcester was beheaded by the victorious Lancastrians in 1470.[11]

Caxton's translation of the *Mirrour of the World* was made at the request of Hugh Bryce, Alderman and " Cytezeyn " of London, who wished to present it to Lord Hastings, Chamberlain of King Edward and Lieutenant of Calais. As Keeper of the Exchange and one of the Governors of the Mint, Bryce had been of great service to the King in helping to get together the money for the dowry of Margaret of York. He had served on several of the embassies to which Caxton had also been appointed.

Before the death of Edward IV (1483) Caxton had so prospered in his business that he was renting another apartment. Accounts at Westminster show that he continued paying rent for both places until his death.[12]

The year of King Edward's death was an important one for the reputation of the Red Pale. Gower's *Confessio Amantis*, *The Pilgrimage of the Soul*, Mirk's *Festial*, and *The Golden Legend* all bear this date. It is probable that seven of the undated books also belong to this year, among them being two of Chaucer's—*The Book of Fame* and *Troilus and Creside*—a second (illustrated) edition of the *Game of Chess*, and *The Boke callid Cathon*, a prose version of Cato's distichs.

The only name brought out as a patron in this list (he dedicated the *Cathon* to the city of London) is that of William, Earl of Arundel, whose encouragement made possible the completion of his most ambitious undertaking—*The Golden Legend*. This nobleman helped to reinstate Edward IV in 1471, and, following the death of Warwick, was given the Kingmaker's office of Warden of the Cinque Ports. He served on the commission to inquire into the insurrections in Kent, and was appointed member of the great council (on which John Russell also served), left in charge when Edward invaded France in 1475. To this " puyssant noble & vertuous erle " all lovers of English literature join with Caxton in gratitude not only for his promise " to take a resonable quantyte " of the finished books, but for the personal encouragement which induced the discouraged author to complete his plan. It is to be hoped that on his death in 1487 his heirs continued the " yerely fee " he had promised of " a bucke in sommer & a doo in wynter ".

During the short reign of Richard III appeared *Æsop's Fables*, *The Knight of the Tower*, *The Curial*, the second edition (with illustrations) of *The Canterbury Tales*, Lydgate's *Life of Our Lady*, and the *Order of Chivalry*. This last, with its impassioned plea for the restoration of knightly exercises and their accompanying virtues, was dedicated to Richard III.

The year 1485, which marked the fall of Richard on Bosworth field and the crowning of Henry VII, is notable for the appearance of Malory's *Morte Darthur*. Other books of this year were the *Life of Charles the Great*, *Paris and Vienne*, and the undated *Life of Saint Winifred*.

From this group one name emerges as " a good and synguler frende " of Caxton. This is " maister Wylliam Daubeney ", at whose request, Caxton tells us in his epilogue, he translated the life of *Charles the Great*. The name of Sir William Daubeney is not a well-known one, but records show that he was Searcher in the port of London in the years 1480 and 1481. He also bought wine for the king's army at this time. Under Richard III he was also Searcher, and is described in addition as Clerk of the Jewels. Later he served as Commissary General in the Office of the Admiralty. Under Henry VII he seems to have suffered for his service to the House of York, for he appears among those attainted of treason.[13]

Not long after the accession of Henry VII Caxton translated and printed a work as a memorial of one of his friends who had recently died. This work, entitled *Good Manners*, was undertaken, he explained, out of regard for " an honest man & a specyal frende of myn, a mercer of London named William Pratt ", who had given him the French version of the book shortly before dying. *The Royal Book*—this, too, was designed to improve the morals of the common people—he also tells us was translated by him " atte requeste of a worshipful marchaunt & mercer of London ". From these references it is evident that he not only maintained the friendships he had made during his business career (William Pratt was with Caxton fined for not attending the " riding " of Mayor Fielding in 1453), but that merchants as well as noblemen and ecclesiastics were keenly interested in the work he was doing in giving literature to the people.

By 1489 we find the new king himself commissioning an important piece of work. *The Fayts of Arms* (the king's own French copy was delivered to Caxton by the Earl of Oxford) was translated and published to give instruction to " every gentylman and man of warre " in the conduct of military affairs. The Earl of Oxford, who acted as intermediary in this transaction, became patron in his own person for other works. At his request (" my good synguler and especial lord " is the phrase by which Caxton designates him) was translated and printed *The Four Sons of Aymon*. For him, too, was prepared a book, of which no trace remains but Caxton's statement that he wrote it, *The Life of Robert Earl of Oxford*.

Another great figure brought by the new reign into the circle of Caxton's patrons was Margaret Beaufort, mother of King Henry VII. This great lady, characterized as "the brightest ornament of her sex in the fifteenth century", has been made the subject of five different biographies during the past century. Praised by Fisher and Erasmus, she is remembered with special gratitude at Cambridge for her foundations of Christ's College and St. John's. Of her the poet Gray wrote :—

> Foremost and leaning from her golden cloud
> The venerable Margaret see.

Married in 1482 (for the third time) to Lord Stanley, Earl of Derby, she took up her residence in London at Derby House. She was largely instrumental in bringing about the marriage between Elizabeth of York, eldest daughter and heir of Edward IV, and her son Henry Tudor, representative of the House of Lancaster. At the court of her son she determined the rules of etiquette,[14] and her influence was always wholesome and wise. "Peacemaker" is the designation frequently applied to her. Her relations with the queen, her daughter-in-law, seem to have been most happy.

It was for these two "hye and noble" princesses that Caxton published the *Fifteen Oes*, a collection of prayers in English. This is the only known existing book from Caxton's press with illustrated borders. It is also noteworthy for the fine woodcut of the crucifixion that appears among the illustrations. An interesting discovery by Henry Bradshaw proves that the woodcut border was used by Caxton on at least one other work, of which no copy has ever been found. The find in question was a fragment from a binding consisting of a discarded sheet of this book which contained a printer's "take-off" of another work with illustrated border, but so indistinct that its nature could not be determined.[15]

At the request of the Lady Margaret, Caxton translated and published the French romance of *Blanchardyn and Eglantine*, which—he tells us—he had sold her some time before. This, together with the *Fifteen Oes*, contains his latest reference—so far as can be traced—to patrons or personal friends, providing we except the dedication of his *Eneydos* to Prince Arthur, the baby Prince of Wales.[16]

The churchwardens' accounts of St. Margaret's show burial fees in the year 1490 for "Mawde Caxton"—which may indicate the death of the printer's wife—and in the next year fees are recorded for the burying of William Caxton himself. This last item is considerably larger than usual, a fact which suggests high public respect and honour to his memory.

In reviewing the work completed during the fourteen years at Westminster every student of his life is struck with his remarkable industry. Probably the most reliable summary of his work—that of Mr. Gordon Duff—makes the number of books actually printed by him in England, counting separate editions, ninety-six. This, considering the laborious nature of the work carried on with primitive equipment, and the necessity of many operations now performed by specialists, is no mean achievement.

But the mere printing was only a small part of Caxton's work. He did all his own editing, and most of the translations which he published. Some idea of the immense labour involved in these translations may be gained by glancing through a list of the titles: *Recuyell of the Historyes of Troye*, *Game of the Chesse*, *Jason*, *Mirrour of the World*, *Reynard the Fox*, *Godefroy of Boloyne*, *Golden Legend*, *Boke callid Cathon*, *Knight of the Towre*, *Æsop*, *Order of Chivalry*, *Royal Book*, *Charles the Grete*, *Paris and Vienne*, *Good Manners*, *Doctrinal of Sapience*, *Art and Craft to know Well to Die*, *Fayts of Arms*, *Eneydos*, *Curial*, *St. Wenefrede*, *Blanchardyn and Eglantine*, *Four Sons of Aymon*, *Gouvernayle of Helthe*.

Add to these the lost life of *Robert Erle of Oxford*, the ten books of *Ovyde his Methamorphose*, existing in manuscript, and the large compilation called by him *Vitas Patrum*, which Wynkyn de Worde tells us he finished on the day of his death, and we have a body of literary achievement remarkable in itself. Especially is this true when we remember that the work was entered upon late in life and continued among many distractions and interruptions made by the demands of business and civic responsibilities.

NOTES

1. The verses prefixed to these chapters, except where otherwise specified, are all taken from Wynkyn de Worde's preface to his edition of *Bartholomæus* in 1495.

2. Duff: *William Caxton*, p. 33.

3. Scofield: *Edward IV*, vol. ii, p. 435.

4. I take this opportunity of acknowledging the kindness of Mr. Lawrence Tanner of Westminster School in pointing out to me the present day correspondence of the locality marked with a star in Canon Westlake's diagram.

5. Duff: *William Caxton*, p. 88. *Dict. Nat. Biog.*, Article "de Worde."

6. He is so described in *The Secret History of Burgundy*, a curious historical novel translated from the French by G. Roussillon in 1723.

7. Gairdner: *Richard III*, p. 73.

8. Full accounts of this famous encounter are given in *Excerpta Historica*, London, 1831, and *Mémoires d'Olivier de la Marche*, Paris, 1883.

9. Established by Philip the Good on his marriage to Isabella of Portugal.

10. It was in this year that John Giglis went before the convocation in England and asked in the Pope's name for an aid for war against the Turks (Scofield: *Edward IV*, vol. ii, p. 389). The clergy avoided a definite answer.

11. Blades makes the strange error (*Life*, p. 71, and continued in later editions) of placing "Sir John Fastolf, Bart., a great lover of books," among those who are known to have employed him. Sir Sidney Lee (in the *Dict. Nat. Biog.*) states that "Sir John

Fastolf eagerly purchased his books ", and that the Earl of Worcester was the intimate friend of Caxton. The death of John Tiptoft in 1470 makes it unlikely that Caxton knew him personally. It is interesting to note that the Earl of Worcester was arraigned for treason before the Earl of Oxford, whose father and brother he had sentenced to death eight years before. The man, then, who condemned Tiptoft was the same who became one of Caxton's most important patrons under Henry VII.

12. Westlake: *Westminster Abbey* (2 vols.), 1923, vol. ii, pp. 382–3.

13. Herrtage: *Charles the Great* (E.E.T.S. Extra Series), contains the best account.

14. Her books giving observances to be followed on various occasions still exist.

15. Henry Bradshaw: *Collected Papers*, " The Fifteen Oes ".

16. *The Four Sons of Aymon*, probably published in 1489, was dedicated to the Earl of Oxford.

CHAPTER III

ANTIQUITY IN ACTION, AS VIEWED BY THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY

Now dyverse playes in his name
I shall let passe forth and far
And aventure to play oo long game;
Also I shall spare
Wodes, medes, and feldes,
Places that I have played inne;
And his name that all thing weldes
This game I shall beginne.

IT was with the tale of Troy that Caxton caught the fancy of the youthful Margaret of York and began the "long game" of translating and printing. But it was a Troy as far from that of Homer as the high-peaked headdresses and closely-fitted waists of her ladies-in-waiting were from the classic fillets and simple draperies of Homer's heroines.

To the imagination of Raoul Lefevre,[1] author of the French tale translated by Caxton, Trojans and Grecians—including their gods—were blood brothers of Tristram and Gawayne. Hercules is given knighthood by Creon, and confers in turn this high honour upon Jason. Heroes of antiquity enter the lists and joust while ladies watch the tournament from "skaffoldes". Callisto entered a cloister in spite of Jupiter's plea: "Hit were better that ye abode among the worldly people that enplenyssh the world." And Jupiter disguises himself as a nun to woo her.

It would have been difficult to fit these heroes into the mould of Galahad, or even Sir Launcelot with his unswerving loyalty to one lady; but the court for which Lefevre wrote was not so strict in its ideas of loyalty in love. Anthony, the famous Bastard of Burgundy, unsurpassed by contemporaries in knightly fame, was but one among many illegitimate children of Philip the Good. The shifting object for the devotion of Jupiter, Hercules, or Jason caused no apparent distress either to the pious author or to his orthodox readers.

And yet it would be a mistake to consider the work as one of lax standards. The stories were there; they could not be changed. It mattered comparatively little how much a mediæval author borrowed from others, even without acknowledgment, but it was part of his literary conscience to preserve the matter of his tale. Often, of course, he must choose from conflicting versions. Always he did his best to preserve the outline of tradition. His originality consisted partly in the way he chose and blended his themes, but mainly in his interpretation of characters and explanation of events.

Here lies the interest of Lefevre's Troy book. Just as Shaw's *Saint Joan* will probably be regarded by future ages of value for the light it throws upon the time of Shaw and not for the understanding it gives of the age of Jeanne d'Arc, so the *Recuyell* is of real importance to a knowledge of Burgundian culture at a time when it led European civilization in artistic and courtly affairs. It is by no means fair to dismiss as of little value Caxton's first book because it did not interpret antiquity in the spirit of the Renaissance.[2]

Structurally the *Recuyell of the Historyes of Troye* falls into three parts, each forming a book that deals with a separate destruction of Troy.

The first book relates that Uranus of Crete had two sons. Saturn, the inventor of agriculture, was his mother's favourite. At the death of Uranus, Titan[3] claimed his heritage as the eldest, but the mother declared Saturn chief. The dispute was finally compromised by giving the rule to Saturn, providing he slew any male child he might have, so that succession might fall to the elder line.

Saturn, marrying his sister Cibelle, honourably killed his first son. His description as " the tryste or sorrowfull " followed as a result of his grief at having to continue this practice. Cibelle, however, at the birth of " laughing Jupiter," was incapable of obeying, and under cover of a pretended death the child was secretly reared, as were also his successors, Neptune and Pluto.

Meanwhile Dardanus, son of Corynthus, king of Corinth, slew his brother Jasius and fled, settling near the Hellespont in Asia. The kingdom he founded was later known as Troy, from Troos his grandson, third and most famous king.

Lichaon, eldest son of Titan, had become king of the Pelagians. As a ruler he was so treacherous and bad that the people " had grete shame & fureur to beholde so hounteuse and abhomynable werk and outrageous synne ". They turned to the young champion Jupiter to free them from the oppressor.

In this conflict use was made of the invention of " the wise & subtyl virgyne Menerve ", who had " fonde the maner to forge & make armes ". Jupiter and the cause of justice won. Lichaon fled into a great forest, where he did penance for nine years in the form of a wolf.

As Jupiter was seeking the vanished tyrant he came upon fair Callisto, weeping the loss of her father Lichaon. Jupiter, infatuated, tried to comfort her, but she insisted on entering " a cloistre in the wood of Archade ", which had been founded by Diana. In spite of his arguments she persisted, and he was persuaded " to suffre this virgyne entre in to religion ".

But he could not forget the beauty of Callisto. This passion grew until " he concluded on a day " to " putte hym in the habyte of a relygiouse woman ". In this disguise he entered the convent and succeeded in forcing Callisto, but not in winning her love. When at last he departed " she was passing joious ffor she had hym leuer ferre than nyghe ".[4]

As a result of this episode Archas is born in a cave where Callisto has taken refuge. This lad, nourished by the wild beasts in the forest, grew up as one of them. Cruel and fierce, one day, when he was seven years old, he chased his mother in a fit of anger and would have slain her. She fled to Jupiter, who received them both and trained Archas, later making him king of the Pelagians, and changing their name to Arcadians.

Titan, hearing that Saturn had living sons, called his sons together and made war on Crete. He sacked the city and imprisoned Saturn and Cibelle. In this strait, they sent messengers to Jupiter explaining the circumstances of his birth. Jupiter rescued them and married Juno. Pluto founded the city of Helle in Thessaly, and Neptune became King of Athens. Later Saturn—because of Apollo's oracle, warning him of destruction by his son—made war against Jupiter, who, in fulfilment of the oracle, defeated him and became King of Crete.

While Jupiter thus " flourysshid in honour strength prowesse and vaylliance ", Acrisius reigned in the city of Argus. He, too, in fear of an oracle, was acting as an unnatural father by enclosing his daughter " Danes " in a tower of copper. Jupiter, fired by the fame of her beauty, won over her duenna by clever intrigue, and in true mediæval fashion gained the love of his lady by eloquent speeches—backed, of course, by his heroic bearing.

Saturn in his flight was received by King Troos and fitted out with an army. Gammedes, son of Troos, accompanying him, they invaded Crete, but were repulsed by an army that Jupiter had assembled to release "Danes" from her tower. Saturn and Gammedes were pursued by Jupiter to the walls of Troy. Here the conflict was conducted according to the best usage of mediæval chivalry. Jupiter and Gammedes decided the issue by personal encounter, and though both champions were "right expert to do the feet of armes", the victory rested with Jupiter.[5]

Taking his wounded antagonist with him, Jupiter sailed in search of Danae, who had been set adrift on the sea with the infant Perseus and rescued by a fisher of Naples. Welcomed home by Juno, he celebrated his victories by creating four hundred new knights, whom he equipped with steeds and instructed in "feet of armes . . . after the dyscipline of Yxion and of the Centaures".

Saturn at last made peace with his son and founded a city "where now stante the capytole of rome". Juno gave birth to Vulcan, who "lerned alle sciences in especiall nygromancie Geomancie and promancie". Ceres also added Proserpine to the number of Jupiter's offspring.

The account given of Medusa is particularly mediæval in interpretation. All details are treated as symbolic and made the basis of moralizing. She eludes Neptune and becomes the quest of many knights. Perseus undertakes the adventure, and with his shield "of cristal" (prudence) succeeds and casts Medusa "down fro the whele of fortune". Rhetorical speeches precede the crucial fight. Medusa directs an army, but Perseus, cutting his way to her, "smote endlong and overthwart". Pegasus is described as the " most swyft shyppe that was in alle the world ", built from the rich booty taken in the battle with Medusa.

From this time Perseus grew ever in knightly fame. He assisted Bellerophon in a first-class dragon fight and went against the monster of the sea to rescue Andromeda. She, with mediæval piety, " kneled wyth grete hummylitee wyth bothe her knees, upon the erthe in provokyng her goddes unto the helpe of her champion ". After the unintentional slaying of his grandfather Acrisius, Perseus withdrew to the Orient and founded Persia, with Persepolis as capital.

Again, Jupiter is involved in a grand passion.[6] At the wedding of Amphitryon of Thebes he was infatuated by Alcmena, the bride, and—by the device used by Uther Pendragon to gain Igerne—he made her the mother of Hercules. Juno, " fals olde wicche", then sent serpents, which were strangled by the infant Hercules.

Hercules—like Arthur of similar begetting—is really the hero of the romance. Reared according to the Spartan laws of Lycurgus (which are explained), he so pleases King Egeus of Athens that Theseus is sent to be trained as his companion.[7]

At thirteen he determined to challenge all comers, for the space of fifteen days, to meet him on Mount Olympus, " in Armes . . . or at ony proof or assaye of strengthe." [8]

The meeting was a notable one, with " tentes and loggys " for noblemen and ladies. After the events of each day feasts were held, " whiche endured to mydnyght in daunses and in songes ". At these feasts " Megere and hercules often tymes behelde eche other secretly ", and the " maladye of love " was begun. Throughout the fifteen days none could equal Hercules, and in the final tournament he performed prodigies of valour.

In his first great adventure which followed he brought away thirty rams and thirty ewes from the daughters of Atlas. Soon after he entered the port of Troy and rescued Exione, daughter of King Laomedon, from a hideous sea monster.

Laomedon, jealous of the fame of Hercules, and afraid of his power, shut the gates of Troy against him and refused any reward for his valour. The wrathful Hercules vowed vengeance. With augmented forces he returned, beat down the walls, and sacked Troy.

Thus ends Book I. At the beginning of the second, Juno, still wishing to destroy Hercules, urges him to gain honour by going against the Nemean lions.[9] His struggle with them is vividly described.[10] Of course he gained the victory and the honour that he sought.

Again Juno, the " cursid stepmoder ", sent him into danger, this time against " Busire ". Again he succeeded, and raised the curse from Egypt. Then he wedded Megaera, and was knighted by Creon at a great tournament.[11] He became King of " Iconie ", and overcame the Centaurs at the wedding of Pirithous.

One of the most striking sections of this Troy version is the treatment of Pluto[12] and Proserpine. Pluto, accompanied by Cerberus and a number of companions, went in disguise to a feast in Sicily. " Sera " was " quene of that marche ", with a daughter. " Proserpyne married unto a nobleman named Orpheus that sat beside her and played on the harpe." Pluto seized and carried off Proserpine to " a partie of thessayle in a lowe and basse cite that was callid helle ". Orpheus followed in disguise, and—like Tristram—charmed all with his music, even Pluto, who—like Mark—must fulfil a promise publicly given (he had vowed to grant the unknown musician any request if he would make Proserpine cease weeping).

Helle is described as the gloomy lair of a robber baron, surrounded by high mountains. Orpheus violates the prescribed conditions by looking back, but, instead of giving up the quest after his failure, Pirithous and Theseus undertook to rescue Proserpine by force of arms. The former was killed, and Theseus was just on the point of being overcome when Hercules appeared at the top of the stairs leading down to this " lowe and basse place ". The coming of the rescuer is managed with a degree of suspense worthy of a super-cinema. Hercules after a fierce struggle bound Cerberus and released Proserpine.[13]

Not long after this Hercules offered to help Jason in his quest of the Golden Fleece at Colchis. Laomedon, who had rebuilt Troy, rudely refused to allow them to victual their ships. Hercules vowed once more to destroy Troy, and did so most thoroughly, burning it and leaving not one stone on another.

But Hercules still has valiant deeds to perform and services to render others before his death. He sacks Carthage, carries off Atlas, and learns from him all his " scyence ",[14] fights the Amazons (very carefully called ladies throughout), becomes the champion of Dejanira, and wins her love, slays Nessus, kills the serpent of Lerna,[15] puts Cacus to death, forgets Dejanira and marries " Yole ", slays Diomedes, and finally dies (a death much embellished with speeches) of the " dolorous sherte " sent with all good intentions by Dejanira.[16]

Book III deals with the materials of Homer's siege of Troy, but with many differences. Priamus, the son of Laomedon, has five sons: Hector, Paris, Deiphebus, Helenus, and Troylus; three daughters: Cheusa (whose husband is Æneas), Cassandra, and Polixena; and thirty bastard sons, all valiant knights.

After rebuilding Troy and filling it with riches, he brooded over the insult to his sister Exione (carried off by her rescuer Hercules at the first destruction of Troy and kept as " common woman among Greeks "). Antenor, sent with an appeal for her return, met only with refusal. In retaliation Paris carried off Helen and pillaged the temple from which she was abducted.

The resulting siege of Troy, described in great detail, differs in many ways from the Homeric account. Troilus is slain by Achilles—who has refrained from fighting in the hope of winning Polixena—and dragged at his horse's heels. Achilles meets death by being lured into the Temple of Apollo to meet Polixena. " Breseyda " is described, but readers are referred to Chaucer for her story.

Antenor and Æneas make a treacherous compact with the Greeks after the death of Paris (last of Priam's sons to be slain), and bribe a priest to give up the Palladium.[17] The Greeks make a horse of brass to hold a thousand men as a gift to Apollo in reparation for the theft of the Palladium. This is accepted by Priam and taken into the temple.

Troy is taken after a solemn treaty of peace, Polixena is slain by Pyrus at the tomb of his father, Achilles; Hecuba goes mad, runs amok, and is stoned to death. The return of Ulysses is briefly treated, with two features worthy of note. Nausicäa is made to marry Telemachus, and Ulysses is unintentionally killed by his own son, born of Circe.

The " Lyf of Jason ", Caxton tells us in his prologue, was really a section of the story of Troy, but was not included in Lefevre's *Recueil* because he had previously made from the conquest of the Golden Fleece a separate romance, doubtless on account of the timeliness of the subject in connection with the famous order instituted by the Duke of Burgundy, his patron. Caxton's translation of this was a natural corollary of his Troy book; particularly in view of the fact that Edward IV, under whose protection he produced it, had just been made a member of the Order of the Golden Fleece.

Caxton's prologue is particularly interesting for its description of the room in the ducal castle where Philip had caused the history of the conquest of the fleece to be painted and ingenious contrivances (in memory of Medea's magic arts) arranged, to produce at will artificial snow, rain, lightning and thunder.[18]

The prologue of the author—Lefevre—explains how he came to compose the romance. The galley of his spirit floating over the ocean of ancient tales, seeking some haven, met a ship guided by a single man of sad visage. The author, moved with pity, questioned him and learned he was Jason, grieving over the injury cast upon his fame by those who accused him of falsehood and treachery in his relations with Medea. He prays the author to make a book showing the " indiscrete Iudgement " of these detractors and present the book to the " fader of writars of histories " and " louer of all vertues," Philip of Burgundy. Accordingly the author " ancred " his " galleye " and produced his " litil boke ".

Without attempting to follow the numerous episodes of Jason's valiant career, the reader may be sure he is amply vindicated. As a mediæval hero of romance he is presented not entirely *sans reproche*, but sufficiently so to meet the standards of the Court of Philip the Good or of Edward IV. There is much more of the court of love element in this romance than in the story of Troy, and the various discussions of love and analyses of sentiment suggest the influence of Chrêtien of Troye, writing for an earlier Burgundian Princess, or the discussions held in those Burgundian courts of love presided over by Elizabeth of Vermandois.

One interesting feature of this book is the love and understanding of horses shown. When the Princess Mirro and her maid follow Jason to Athens, the knight and his lady are able to find each other through their horses.[19] Bits of realistic detail throughout give freshness to legend. At the feast upon Jason's return with the fleece of gold he and Medea must restrain expressions of their love, but " they entremarched with their feet under the table ".

After the *Jason*, Caxton undertook no other translation of romances dealing with the matter of antiquity until toward the close of his life. Perhaps the most famous of all his prologues is that prefixed to the *Eneydos* printed in 1490. In it we have the most vivid picture that has been left us of the difficulties confronting one writing in the English language of Caxton's time.[20]

As to content, it is not surprising that one who had dealt so extensively in the first works from his press with events leading up to the fall of Troy should be drawn back in his later years to the fortunes of that most famous of Trojan refugees, Æneas.

But Caxton's hero is by no means the one we know in Virgil. As in his *Jason* and his *Troy*, the translation is made from a French prose romance, presumably of the fifteenth century. In spite of Caxton's admiration for " the fayr and honest termes and wordes in frensh ", the prose style as reflected in the English translation is far less attractive than that of Lefevre. The diction is laboured ; there is much piling up of synonyms, and a marked use of long drawn-out similes.

Since a clear summary and an analysis of the differences that distinguish this from the account given in the *Æneid* is available in a good modern edition,[21] space will not be taken here for a *résumé* of the story. In general, its treatment—like that of *Jason*—lays great emphasis on the love motive. Dido might almost be regarded as the central figure. However, her legacy of vengeance bequeathed to Hannibal gives an epic quality to her passion that lifts it above the plane of sentimentality.

Just as the supernatural is rationalized in the Troy book, so here the spirit of scepticism questions Æneas's journey to Hades, and the reader is referred to Latin authors if he wishes to read such an account.[22] Typically mediæval touches are the preparations for the hunt of Dido and Æneas (chapter xv), and the evident interpolation of Caxton in the description of the sacrifice made by Æneas on the spot where Polydore was slain.[23]

Earlier than the *Eneydos* in translation, but so far as known never printed by Caxton, was *Ovyde hys booke of Methamorphose*.[24] Here again figures of antiquity become fifteenth-century knights and ladies. The characters of Ovid, accustomed to changes, yield gracefully to this additional metamorphosis, and give one of the most charming—in many respects—of Caxton's translations.[25] Here those swift and tragic changes of fortune so dear to the contemplation of the Middle Ages could be dwelt upon with wealth of lingering detail. Morals are much more emphasized than in the verses of Ovid.[26] And, of course, devotion to a lady is a paramount virtue. Venus teaches Paris the code of love according to the Middle Ages. In fact, emotion of all types is heightened and made much of. Eloquence, too, is poured forth in speeches and in praise or denunciation by the author.

All these romances are marked by a love of dramatic sensation. Opportunities for emotional effects are cultivated in much the same spirit that made religious devotees of that age dwell upon the sufferings of Christ and the sorrows of His Mother, or the ecstatic joys of paradise.

Rationalization of myth is another common element. Centaurs are explained as creatures evolved by the imagination of the Trojans, who had never seen fighting on horseback. The werwolf was not really a wolf, but a forest robber who lived like a wolf. When other possibilities of explanation failed, symbolism—peculiarly dear to the Middle Ages—could always give the supernatural a reasonable colouring.

But it is the predominance of chivalric ideals and the characteristic qualities given them that made these romances appeal to their readers. The growth of social consciousness, marked by the great trading companies and the remarkable growth of towns, is reflected in the emphasis laid upon the social service performed by these heroes, who " never fought but for the comyn wele of the world ".

Every chance is seized upon to impress a moral or to turn a passage to spiritual edification. The swift turning of fortune's wheel is never lost sight of.

But why—it may be asked—make antiquity over into their own likeness for this purpose? We can only say, antiquity was in the air; it was the adumbration of the Renaissance.

NOTES

1. Lefevre was Chaplain and Secretary to Philip of Burgundy. For full treatment of his literary indebtedness to Guillaume Fillastre, whom he followed as Secretary to the Duke, see Paulin Paris: *MSS. Français de la Bibl. du Roi*, vol. v, pp. 375 ff.; Oskar Sommer: *Recuyell of the Hist. of Troye*, vol. i, pp. xlviii ff.

2. An interesting example of this criticism is found in the introduction to an edition (1555) of Lydgate's Troy Book. The writer, Robert Braham, after praising famous men who have described the battles of Greeks and Trojans, proceeds to vituperate:

> " Other some so beastly bolde to undertake without eyther wyt or any learning. . . . As by example if a man . . . should seke to find the same in the doynges of Wyllyam Caxton in his leawde recuill of Troye: what sholde he then fynde

thyncke you ? Assuredly none other thynge, but a longe, tedious and braneles bablyng, tending to no end ; nor havyng any certayne begynnynge, but proceadyng therein as an ydyot in his folye, that can not make an end tyll he be bydden."

3. "but Tytan the eldest sone was ffoul evyl favourid, and counterfet. And saturne was merveyllously fayr and amyable."

4. This section treats Jupiter as a hero in an orthodox court of love romance. We are told that " his reste in the nyght was taken from hym . . . & so encresid he to love and desire this virgyne . . . he made his passe time to haunte the woddes & continuelli to hunte the wild bestes. . . . And whan he had ones seen her that day he was all enjoyd."

5. " theyr Cryes were hye and fiers / they smote eche other fiersly and aygerly / the fire sprange oute of their helmes by the myght of theyr strokes / but whan fortune was on the partye of Iupiter / What myght ganymedes doo."

6. " Alle his delectacion and all his besy cure was in beholdyng the ladyes / he desired nothinge but for to be alwey amonge the ladies. And all way had the eye upon them / but in effecte he behelde Alcumena moste in especial."

7. " Hercules and Theseus were bothe of oon Age and lovyd right well togyder Theseus was strong and mighty and a fayr child and had witte ynowh / But hercules passyd And shone as ferre above hym as the sonne shyneth above the sterres."

8. For form of the challenge " wreton & grossyd " by Hercules with " enke and parchemyn," see Sommer : *Recuyell*, pp. 249–50. The knight commissioned to bear the challenge is referred to thus : " And this was the first officer of Armes that ever was."

9. " Hercules was grete in herte and in courage exalted in honour he had lever have dyed than to have done a thynge werof should folowe ony dyshonoure."

10. The lions " howled so yrously that hit semed that the thonder had spronge out of her stomackes All the foreste denned thereof ". Hercules " had Joye in hymself of the bataylle whyche was stronge to susteyne ". The lions had " clawes that cutted lyke a rasour ".

11. " that same tyme the ladyes and damoyselles wente and mounted upon the scaffoldes the Jousters came into the place. . . . And then oon & other that desired to have worshipp toke her speres and ran ayenst hercules." . . . No man could stand against him but Jason, " and ever after he had a specyall loue to him " (Jason).

12 " This Pluto was the grettest theef and the moste lecherous man of all the world."

13. Cerberus is a " terryble geant " with " an heed mervayllously myschapen / fyers blacke and owggly ". The three heads of the myth are explained symbolically as pride, avarice and luxury, and an orthodox sermonette is appended. Characteristic delight in details of cruel vengeance appears in the death of Cerberus,

who is delivered bound to Ypodane, wife of the slain Pirithous, who

> " did so bynde cerberus to a stake in the theatre of the Cyte. And there yonge and olde noyed and pyned hym thre dayes longe contynuelly / drawynd hym by the berde and crachyng hym in the visage and after slewe hym Inhumaynly and horribly."

14. " He studyed alway and was neuer ydle "—a quaint picture of the burly Hercules in the " lucid intervals " between fights.

15. The seven heads of this monster are treated symbolically as seven riddles which are solved by Hercules through the " scyence " he has gained from Atlas.

16. " Where be now the kynges the empereurs the sowdans and the Prynces that men may speke of the vertuous liberalite of them semblable or lyke unto that of Hercules The men at this day fyght oon ayenst another and make conquestes ynowghe but they attrybue them unto their synguler prouffit. They resemble not unto Hercules that neuer fought but for the comyn wele of the world."

17. " O what trayson was thys of a preest that louyd better for couetyse to betraye his cyte than to leue the gold that was given him. Certes hit is a foul vyce in a preest the synne of couetyse. But fewe have been to fore thys tyme and fewe ben yet but yf they ben attaynte therwyth / wherof hyt is grete pyte syn hyt is so that auaryce is moder of all vyces."

18. Cf. Appendix, p. 231.

19. " And dide do put the two palfrayes in a stable by Iasons hors which anon began to neyhe assone as he smellid them / for he knewe them for asmoche as they had ben long to gyder in Oliferne / And so made they grete chere eche to other. Wherof the bourgoys had grete meruaile. But thoughte nothing but well and gaf hem heye and otes / . . . Iason wente strayt into the stable to hys horse / whome he loued well. But incontinent whan he had ben there a litil and that he had parceyuid the two palfroyes of the lady and of the damoiselle / him semed that he had seen them tofore tyme." . . .

20. Appendix p. 285 ff.

21. E.E.T.S., Extra Series, No. LVII.

22. " but this mater I leue for it is feyned and not to be byleuyed / who that will knowe how eneas wente to helle late hym rede virgyle, claudyan, or the pistelles of Ouyde & there he shall fynde more than trouthe."

23. " Lyke as we Englysshe men doo when we halowe ony solempnyte in the tyme of somer / In strowynge wyth herbes and settynge up of grene trees and bowes in the chirches and chappellis for to refresshe the people there assembled by cause of the fest & solempnyte there to be halowed."

24. This work is known only through a unique manuscript, No. 2124, in the Pepysian Library at Magdalene College, Cambridge. It contains the signature " Lumley ", indicating—since Lord Lumley inherited the library of the Earls of Arundel, one of whom was Caxton's patron—that it may have been a presentation copy from Caxton himself. It is not impossible that it may be the work of Caxton's own hand. The manuscript begins with Book X. The colophon is as follows :

> " Thus endeth Ovyde hys booke of Methamorphose translated & fynysshed by me William Caxton at Westminster the xiij day of Appryll, the yere of our lord miiij^{c}iiij^{xx} And the xx yere of the Regne of kynge Edward the fourth."

25. It would be superfluous to dwell on the attractive qualities of this work since the appearance of the delightful introduction by Mr. H. T. B. Brett-Smith to the edition of the Shakespeare Head Press, 1924, under the joint editorship of himself and Mr. Stephen Gaselee.

26. Note the horrified warning of the author as he begins a tale that shocks him :

> " Ye maydens & doughtirs withdrawe you that ye here it not. And if ye here it beleve it not. And if ye beleve it be ye certayn that she receyved therefor cruel deserte & terryble punycion."

CHAPTER IV

THE CONTEMPLATIVE LIFE OF ANTIQUITY—A FIFTEENTH-CENTURY INTERPRETATION

Eternal lawde to God grettest of Myght
Be hertely yeve of every creature
Which of his goodnesse sendeth grace & lyght
To sondry folke as blessed aventure,
Whoos spyryte of counsell comfortyth full sure
All such as luste to seeke for sapience
And makyth them wyse by grete intelligence.

IN the romances translated by Caxton writers turned back to classical antiquity and reconstructed it in their own image. To make this reconstruction complete—since throughout the Middle Ages the life of contemplation was ranked higher than that of action—it was necessary to interpret also its philosophy.

Whether by chance, the promptings of the time-spirit, or some instinct in his own soul, this is precisely the course followed by Caxton. The first English book with a definite date (November 18, 1477), if not the first printed in England, was Lord Rivers's translation, the *Dictes or Sayengis of the Philosophres*.[1]

To a modern reader accustomed to chapter headings and various devices for emphasis and subordination, it is difficult at first approach to this work to avoid an appalling sense of monotony. But the apparent sameness of the various philosophers becomes much less on a careful perusal of their sayings. A few emerge with fairly clear characteristics, though the majority remain—so to speak—in very low relief.

Sedechias, " the first philosophir by whom through the wil and pleaser of oure lorde god Sapience was understande ", is extremely shadowy. He lays down sixteen virtues that " every creature of good beleve ought to have ", and follows them up with general bits of wisdom.

Hermes, or " mercuri ", takes on clearer outlines. Under his Hebrew name " Enok " he is traced back to Adam. Taking with him seventy-two " personnes of divers tonges which alweye stered and exhorted the people to obeye our lord ", he passed through the world, and " edified " a hundred and eight towns.[2] Kings and people obeyed him. He instituted " orisons & praieres ", also fasts[3] and almsgiving, and—most piquant in the god of thieves and prevarication—" commanded them expressly that they shulde kepe them fro parjury ". He taught how and when to offer sacrifice and the proper observances in astrology. His apothegms emphasized the importance of truth and honesty, of avoiding the company of thieves " and of thoos that use evil werkis ".[4]

Tac and Salquinus are figures—dimmer even than Sedechias—who utter general platitudes.

" Omer ", though, as usual, in the Middle Ages not a prime favourite, assumes a degree of individuality. He " was an auncient versifier in Grece and of the gretest astate there. . . . He was a man fayre formed and of large stature, and lived 108 yere And here after folowe his seyinges ". Although most of these are commonplaces in regard to discretion in speech, keeping good company, loving " sapience ", etc., he varies the monotony by an *exemplum* of a shipwrecked man. This philosophical soul, instead of despairing, drew geometrical figures in the sand, and so impressed the King on whose shores he was cast that the monarch " sent through alle hys provynces and charged them they shulde enforce them self to lerne and have such connyngis as shulde byde with them after theyr ship were lost ".

Solon is made about as important as Homer. He " was of Athenes and made many bookis of predicacions and establysshed the lawes there ". His sayings emphasized the fact that " an evil tunge was sharper than a glayve ", and urged his disciples to " ware that ye be no mokers for that engendreth hattered ".

" Sabyon " presents the ideal of friendship. He was " a grete deffendour of his neyghbours ". Taken prisoner by a king seeking to " slee " his friends, he refuses under the most extreme torture to say anything that would harm them.[5]

One of the most prominent figures is " Ypocras . . . the first fynder of the art of phisike ".[6] The section devoted to him tells of the development of medical knowledge and its extension from an hereditary family treasure of secret lore to " alle that were apt to lerne it ", exacting from these in turn a promise to " teche it further ". He is one of the few philosophers given personal description.[7]

The apostle of moderation—although not distinctly characterized—is " Pitagoras ".[8] But the men given most prominence and quoted most voluminously are Diogenes, Socrates, Plato, and—strangest to find among the philosophers—Alexander.

The characteristic quality of Diogenes was plain speaking. When asked why he was called " dogly ", he said : " because I barke at the fooles and fawne upon the wysemen ". Questioned as to his silence, he answered, " ther was grete vertue in a mannys eres ".

Of Socrates, the exponent of justice, we are told, " he was of rede colour & of competent stature, hore heded and wele faced, demure of speche, a grete studyer and loker upon the erthe and when he spake he wagged his litil finger ". His unfortunate marriage is dwelt upon and his methods of teaching. A very sympathetic account is given of his death and of his last words to those about him.[9]

Plato, very extensively quoted, appealed to the mediæval mind because he " dide teche his sapyence by allegorye ".[10] Aristotle is revered for his " Gramare Retorike and other bookes of poetrie ".[11] As might be expected, the bulk of his sayings are admonitions to his royal pupil. Alexander, his pupil, is the ideal king. Like Harun al-Rashid, he " wente dysguysed visyting his lordes and enquerying of her dedes ". He rewarded good judges and punished evil ones. Interesting tales are told of his experiences. Even his conquests are interpreted as the triumph of righteousness over unbelief.[12]

A natural result of the teachings of the philosophers was a keen realization of the importance of youth and provision for its right training. The favourite school-book of the middle ages, used to teach Latin and morality at the same time, was Cato's distichs.[13] This collection of moral apothegms cannot in the genuine sense be ascribed to antiquity, since it probably dates from the third or fourth century A.D. It does, however, convey the garnered wisdom of earlier sages in a form readily committed to memory.

Caxton printed this in two forms : a paraphrase in verse, and a fairly extensive prose gloss. The verse paraphrase—in rime royal—was made by " Maister Benet Burgh " while he was Vicar of Malden in Essex. He became prebendary of St. Paul's in 1472, and later High Canon of St. Stephen's, Westminster. It was here, doubtless, that Caxton made his acquaintance and obtained for the press his poetic paraphrase of Cato made " in balade ryal for the erudicion of my lord Bousher—Sone & heyr at that tyme to my lord the erle of Estsex ".

As printed by Caxton, *Parvus Cato* comes first. It consists of six stanzas in rime royal, each used to gloss one of the Latin verses. A seventh stanza is addressed by the translator to the young lord for whom the work was designed. *Magnus Cato* follows. This is made up of four books, each consisting of a stanza affixed to each distich of the Latin original, and two or more closing stanzas of exhortation to the young lord.

The youth is given advice on reading: Virgil for nature, Lucan for heroic deeds, Ovid for lovers. But better than all, is to learn true sapience. Beware of envy, " one of the chyef paynes of helle " ; do not talk much of yourself either in praise or dispraise. Avoid wrath, extravagance, carnal appetite, avarice. One should never be discouraged by adversity, or make too much show of virtue or of knowledge.

> For sumtyme to be unwyse *by apparence*
> Amonge the wyse is cleped hye prudence.

The nature of the soul is explained with the need for its instruction and discipline. Rest and recreation are necessary, but must not become sloth or frivolity. The discipline of adversity is wholesome, and not to be dreaded by a clear conscience. Much good advice, also, is given concerning women.

> Wedde not a wyf for hyr inheritance
> For she wol caste it often in thy berd.

Also :—

> Some women wepen of pure feminite
> Whan otherwyse they can not theyr entent
> Acheve, but yet beware of suche nyce pyte
> Thy manly reson for that be not blent
> For suche wepyng thy herte ought never relent
> Some women of kynde be ever wepyng
> And under that they can both prick and stynge.

But women are not always to be guarded against. Often following a wife's advice is " of grete prudence ", and always a mother should be honoured " in especial ".

Moderation is a great virtue ; seek it in all things —in wealth, in food, in emotions. Accept without anger the beating of teachers. Reverence old age. Avoid excessive praise or suspicion, and, finally, no matter how " grete kunnyng " has been gained by study, be not satisfied but seek more.

A concluding stanza urges the youth to accept these flowers of wisdom, and with their sweetness preserve himself from base infections to which he may be exposed.[14]

Caxton did not limit his output of *Cato* to three editions of this verse paraphrase. He also printed —making his own translation from an unknown French source—a prose gloss consisting of explanations and illustrative stories drawn from " holy faders & auncyent Cronykles trewe & approved ".

This " book callid *Caton* " he dedicated to the city of London with the expressed hope of contributing in some way towards arresting the decadence he observed since his youth in that " noble cyte ".[15] The change, he believes, must begin with the children, and he knows nothing better calculated to help them " come to honoure and worshyppe " than this book, which may well be called " the Regyment or governance of the body and sowle ".

The book is really a treasury of quaint tales and ethical homilies similar to the collection made by the Knight of the Tower for the instruction of his daughter, published by Caxton the same year. When we note in the colophon that this was " the fyrst yere of the regne of kynge Rychard the thyrd (1483) ", we can understand Caxton's mood of discouragement and his feeling that something must be done to ensure a future for English citizenship.

More definitely foreshadowing the Renaissance than his other books dealing with the philosophy of antiquity is his edition of Cicero's essays on old age and friendship. The English translation printed by him shows his warm regard for Sir John Fastolf and John Tiptoft, Earl of Worcester.[16] As the works themselves have been since Caxton's time made so familiar to modern readers in other forms, the main interest of the translations he printed is in their quaint phrasing, which often gives new and unexpected vigour or picturesqueness to a familiar idea.[17]

The same volume includes " the Argument of the declamacyon ", made by two young Romans on the nature of true nobility.[18] This " argument " is sugar-coated ; it is framed in a tale which might be termed the fifteenth-century prototype of Stockton's *The Lady or the Tiger*.

In the most flourishing period of the Roman Empire the fame of a certain Fulgens was " right ferre spredde ". Riches, honour, and popularity were his, but the greatest gift of fortune was his daughter Lucresse, a maiden not only of " surmountyng beaute ", but also without peer in conduct, wisdom, manners, and wide reading.

Naturally there were many young men who " hertly loved her ", among them " tweyne in especial ". The first of these, Publius Cornelius, was of most illustrious rank and great wealth, but cared only for pleasure. The second, Gaius Flaminius, of good but obscure parentage and only moderate wealth, was a man of personal distinction, whose chief aim in life was " to helpe his frende and contrey ".

By chance the two chose the same time to approach the father of Lucresse. He—perhaps as a special tribute to her judgment—laid the two suits before his daughter. At first she begged to be excused from all thought of matrimony, but, as her father insisted that she choose, she at last asked him to give her to "the more noble of bothe".

Since the situation was new and her answer had been made public, the matter was brought before the Roman Senate for decision.

The "oracions" of the two suitors then succeed each other, making up the body of the book. And it is an interesting controversy, by no means one-sided. At the close of each speech one wonders how the other will make rebuttal. But the weight of argument is gradually gathered up in the eloquence of Gaius Flaminius, so that, although the "dome and sentence" is left to the reader, little doubt can remain of the decision in his favour.

With this group of books in which the contemplative life of former ages is interpreted in the spirit of the fifteenth century, *Boëthius* should logically find a place; but, since Caxton's edition of *Boëthius* throws much light on his attitude toward Chaucer, it will be treated in a later chapter. The work of reconstruction, it is clear, has been as thorough here as in the romances. The sages of antiquity have been made to offer their pagan wisdom clothed with the piety and symbolism familiar to the mediæval mind. Philosophy has been made safe for this age of democratic pilgrimages and symbolic pageants.

NOTES

1. The French *Dits moraulx des philosophes* from which this was translated was the work of Guillaume de Tignonville (d. 1414). It came into the hands of Lord Rivers in 1473 on a pilgrimage to the shrine of St. James of Compostella (see Appendix, prologue to *Dictes*). His opinion of Caxton's literary ability was evidently high; witness his request that the printer "oversee" his translation. To this request is due the addition of the chapter "towchyng women", and the delectable passage introducing it (see Appendix).

The " genial raillery "—to quote from Mr. Brett-Smith's " Ovyde " —with which " the printer gently teases the noble and puissant lord ", shows us a side of Caxton seldom recognized—a humour not unlike or unworthy of Chaucer himself.

2. " . . . whiche he fulfilled with science and was the first that fonde the science of scoles ".

3. " . . . every wyke oon day ".

4. Characteristic " dictes " from him are :

> " Loke ye sette noo baytes to the noysaunce of eny body, nor that ye seke thaire hurtes by cautelles or sotiltees, for such workes wol not be hidde but at the laste they wol appere."
>
> " A right recommendable thing in heven and in erthe is a true tunge."

5. " Sabyon answered that for no payne he wolde not telle that thing that shulde noye his frendes. And in dede beyng in the engyne cut his tong with his owne teth to thentent that he myght not accuse his felowes and frendes."

Characteristic sayings of his are :

> " Multiplie thy frendes and that shall asswage thy care."
>
> " A man ought not to drede the deth of the body but the deth of the soule."

6. It is of interest to note that Hippocrates was also the hero of a long section in the early Grail history of the prose vulgate Arthurian Cycle.

7. He " was of little stature, grete heded, croke backed, moche studyeng and of littel langage, and moche lokying down to the erthe, holding in his honde a flabotomye of municion for latyng blood or a grene braunche prouffitable to the eyes ". Sayings from him are :

> " The helth is not to be slowthful in goode excercises and not to fil hys body wyth wynes and metes."
>
> " Science is lyke the rote of a tree and operacion is like the braunches."

8. One interesting touch is his quite modern mastery of calories ; " he moderated so his mete and his drinke that he was at noo tyme fatter nor leener than other ".

Other precepts of moderation are :

> " He that clatereth moche it is signe that he hath litel knowledge."
>
> " Dispende not to outrageousely nor be not to scarse."
>
> " It is better to aman to lye upon the hard grownde belevyng fermely in god than to lye in abedde of golde puttyng doubtes in hym."

9. Characteristically monastic interpretations are :

(1) The account of his death—

> "He defended that no man shuld worship false ydolles but wolde that all honnour and worship should be referred to the creatour of all thyngis, and for that opynyon he was condempned to deth by XII judges of Athenes."

(2) The explanation of his 12,000 disciples with their division into—

> "iij ordres that is to saie in clergie in knyghthode & in comyns, and ordeigned the clergie above the knyghthode, the knyghthode above the peple and that the clergie shulde pray for the knyghthode and the peple, the knyghthode shulde defend the clergie and the peple, the peple to labour for the clergie and the knyghthode."

(3) His warnings against women, most of them omitted by the chivalrous translator (see Appendix) who did, however, include:

> "Eschewe the ginnes that women set to take men withal, for they be hinderers of sapience."

10. Among his dictes are:

> "He that techeth good to other and doth it not himself is lyke to hym that lighteth a candell to another and goth himself darkeling."
>
> "A suspectious man is of evyl condicions and lyveth in sorowe."

When asked how he had learned so much wisdom, he replied:

> "By cause I have putte more oille in my lampe to studie by than wyn in my cuppe."

11. "And for as moche as Sapience is moost noble of all other thinges she ought to be declared by the best rayson and covenable maners and by the moost pleasaunt and short wordes that can be don without errour or letting the sentence for if the reason be spoken imparfetely the name of wysdom is lost therby and so is the speker in fawte. And so the herers resten in dowte of the sentence."

12. He is made to declare:

> "I do not alle these thinges that ye saye of myself, but god hath sente me thurgh alle the worlde for texalte and magnifye his lawe and to destroye them that bileve not in him."

A most interesting tale of his wanderings teaches the immorality of sky-scrapers. He had discovered a people living without any judge, all in houses of the same height, and with a great pit before each door. Questioned in regard to these three peculiarities they replied:

> "First fer the outrageous height of houses love & justice can not be longe in a town among the peple. And they sayd that the pittes or graves were their owne houses to which they shold sone go to. . . . And as touching that they had no juge, they said that they made good justice of them self wherfore they neded no juge."

13. The author is unknown. Dionysius Cato (used in British Museum catalogue) is a mere ascription. "The name 'Cato,' is probably only intended to designate the maxims as wise" (Teuffel: *Hist. of Roman Lit.*, Sec. 398, 1). Blades says: "To be unacquainted with 'Cato' was synonymous with general ignorance. Chaucer continually mentions his work. 'He knew not Catoun, for his wyt was rude'" (*Canterbury Tales*, vol. i, p. 3224).

Parvus Cato was a late addition by Daniel Churche, an ecclesiastic under Henry II.

14. "Now I have gadered floures to your list
   Tasteth theym for they be preservatyf
Holdeth theym fast & bere theym in your fist
   For the pestylence eire whiche is infectif
   I counceyl you & I jeparde my lyf
That yo shul lede your lif in sikernesse
And eke ateyne to moche worthynesse."

Doubtless these stanzas—as the distichs on which they were based—were to be committed to memory by the student and used in time of need as a talisman against whatever danger or temptation confronted the youth. There is an astonishing number of editions and translations of the distichs down to our own times, some with annotations by Erasmus, many "done for the good of schools" or "newly englished to the comforte of all young Schollers". One of the most interesting is an edition printed by Benjamin Franklin (1735) translated into English couplets by an anonymous gentleman "for the Use of his own Children". Franklin's *Printer to the Reader* forms an interesting parallel to Caxton's, which he probably knew nothing of.

15. See Appendix, p. 261, for interesting proof of his love for London and his interest in the quality of its citizenship.

16. See Appendix, p. 244 ff., for prologue and epilogue giving his eulogy of these two noblemen.

The translation of *De Senectute*, made as Caxton tells us, at the ordinance and desire of Sir John Fastolfe, may have been the work of Stephen Scrope, his son-in-law, who had made for him an English translation of the *Dictes or Sayengis* some twenty-six years before that of Lord Rivers (British Museum, MS. Harl., p. 2266). Both this and the *De Amicitia* translated by Tiptoft were made, not directly from the Latin, but from the early fifteenth century French version of Laurence de Premierfait.

17. As illustrations note:

> "And if some god wolde yeve me puissaunce that I whiche am an olde man/myght retourne ayen in to childhode/and that I shulde braye and krye in my swaythyng cloth and in my cradelle like a childe/I wolde it not/but I wolde even refuse it." (From *Old Age*.)
>
> "And I wote never, on lesse than it were wisedome, what bettir thyng (than friendship) myght be graunted unto man by the goddes immortall. Nevirthelesse some saye that richesse is bettir than it. And some heale. And some power, and some worship, and some pleasaunce. But the laste is a beestely opynyon." (From *Friendship*.)

18. The translation—also by John Tiptoft—is from the French of Jean Mielot. This French version is taken from the (Latin) work of Bonaccursus de Montemagno the younger (d. 1429). This was a popular book in the thirteenth century and one of the first from the press of Colard Mansion.

CHAPTER V

MORALS AND MANNERS

> Therefore my leve chyld, I shal nowe telle the—
> Herken me well—the maner and the guyse
> How thi sowle inward shal acqueynted be
> With thewes good and vertues in al wyse.
> Rede and conceyve ; for hs is to despyse
> That redyth ay and wote not what it ment.
> Such redyng is nothyng but wynde myspent.
>
> Benet de Burgh, *Parvus Cato.*

NO object is more frequently mentioned by Caxton than the improvement of morals and religion. This seems to be an ingrained characteristic of English literature. It breathes through all the work of King Alfred ; Chaucer apologizes for and explains what might be construed as out of harmony with this aim. It inspires the highest flights of Milton, wings the shafts of satire in essayists and critics, and forms the obsession of Richardson, " Father of the English Novel ".

Practically everything printed by Caxton might in a general way come under this heading, but there are several works whose *raison d'être* has no other explanation.

Among these latter the first in time as well as one of the most distinctive in type is *The Game and Playe of the Chesse*, printed in Bruges about 1475. In producing this, Caxton became more than a translator, for his materials were gathered from two sources, both French. The first of these was a literal translation by Jean de Faron of the *Liber de Ludo Scaccorum* of Jacques de Cessolis.[1] The second was a very free paraphrase of the same work by Jean de Vignay, introducing many stories and illustrations. Caxton's book is for the most part from the more popular work of Vignay, although chapters one and three are entirely from Faron.[2]

The first chapter introduces to us Evilmerodach, a king in Babylon. According to Caxton he was " a jolye man with oute justice ", evidently a phrase equivalent to " jolly well without justice ", for we learn immediately that he killed his father, hacked him into exactly three hundred pieces, and fed these to three hundred vultures.

Fortunately there happened to be at the court of this unnatural tyrant a philosopher of considerable ingenuity. He was absolutely uncompromising in principle,[3] but by a clever device he succeeded in avoiding the fate of his fellow counsellors, whom the king had put to death because they " displesid hym ".

His device was the game of chess. By means of this he intrigued the fancy of " barons, knyghtes and gentillmen " until they could think and talk of nothing else. Finally, the king was caught by " the beaulte and novelte of the playe and desired to playe agaynst ye philosopher ". But the philosopher said no ; he must first learn how to play. The king agreed that this was reasonable ; he was quite ready to put himself to the trouble of learning the rules.

With this opening the philosopher became master of the situation. He explained the nature of the board and the proper arrangement of the pieces. He made clear the privileges and limitations of king, noblemen, and common people, and how they should be placed and moved. He evidently did not shrink from admonitions of very pointed application, for in a short time the king demanded " upon payne of deth to tell him wherfore he had founden and made this playe".

Then the eloquence of the faithful counsellor was unloosed. He pleaded his love of the king and his desire that his dear lord should live a "gloryous and vertuous lyfe", loved by all and obeyed through honour and respect instead of by force. Such love and honour can only be gained through self-mastery. To bring this about was, in truth, his first reason for inventing the play. He also hoped to provide a means to occupy the spare time of well-to-do people who "drawe them to ease and ydlenes wherof cometh ofte tymes many evyllys and grete synnes". A third incentive was purely for recreation, and because "every man naturelly desireth to knowe and to here noveltees and tydynges".

This introduction has occupied Book I. Book II treats of the "forme . . . maners and estate" (giving a chapter to each) of the king, queen, "alphyns" (later bishops), knights, and rooks (king's ministers). Many stories are brought in to illustrate the duties and obligations of each of these important ranks.

The various classes of common people making up the pawns are described in Book III. A chapter is devoted to "labourers and werkmen"; one to "smythes" of all kinds, including not only ironworkers, but jewellers, coiners, carpenters, and masons; one to those who follow crafts of pen, scissors or knife (and it is astonishing how many of these there are); one to the "marchants or changers"; one to physicians, spicers, and apothecaries; one to tavern-keepers and sellers of food or drink; one to town officers and toll gatherers; and one to messengers and couriers.

The fourth book, under the symbol of the various movements, after the figures are properly formed and placed on the board, treats of the relations of these different classes to each other. A final chapter gives "the epilogacion and recapitulacion".

Here we are told that when Evilmerodach had heard all the philosopher's explanations he "thanked hym gretly" and "changed his lyf his maners & alle his evyll condicions". And thus we are left with the happy ending brought about by the transformation of a "vicyous and disordynate" ruler into one "debonayre gracious and full of vertues to alle peple".

Not so indirect, in fact very closely modelled on the distichs of Cato, are the *Morale Proverbes of Cristyne*. This little pamphlet, printed soon after the *Dictes*, was also translated by Lord Rivers and was intended, no doubt, for the use of his ward Edward, Prince of Wales.

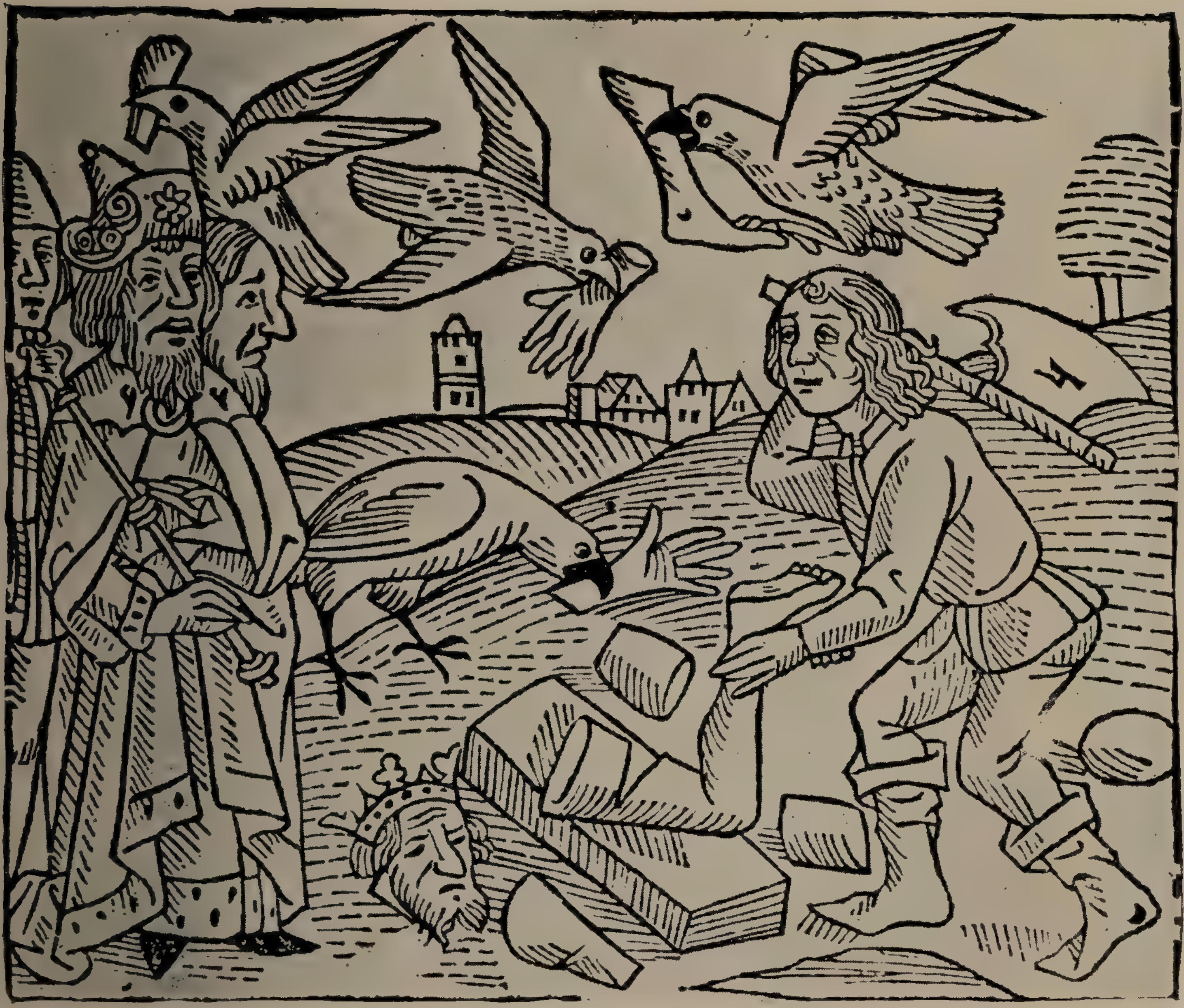
The original verses were the work of Christine de Pisan, except for Jeanne d'Arc, perhaps the most important woman of the fifteenth century.[4] The proverbs were written as a supplement to *Les enseignemens moraux*, intended for her son Jean Castel, part of whose training was received in England in the service of the Earl of Salisbury.

These maxims were culled from many sources and cast into vernacular verse easy to carry in the memory.[5] The colophon of this book is of special interest because it is one of Caxton's rare attempts at verse.[6]

About the same time Caxton printed two other small pamphlets designed for the benefit of lads in training at court or in the service of gentlemen: *The Boke of Curteyse* and Lydgate's *Stans puer ad mensam*. These two little etiquette books contain practically the same admonitions and throw interesting light upon the education of the period.[7]

The *Book of Courtesy* or *Lytyll John* is the longer and more complete manual of instruction. Like the *Stans puer*,[8] it is written in stanzas (rime royal), but unlike the latter, which confines itself to details of

PLATE VI



THE GAME OF THE CHESSE
(*Original* 12 × 10 *mm.*)

[*Face p.* 82

behaviour, it deals with larger questions affecting the formation of character, such as games and reading. The passages devoted to English poets are interesting examples of sympathetic criticism. The author, though unknown, was evidently a disciple of Lydgate.

With this difference in mind, a summary of *Lytyll John* will convey a fair idea of both books.

Little John, since your tender infancy is like wax ready to receive any print or figure, I have devised—in order to move you to follow virtue and turn away from vice—this little book of instruction for you ;

> according unto your age,
> Playne in sentence, but pleyner in langage.

Do not let your ear be here and your heart somewhere else, but be diligent in whatever you do. First of all when you rise in the morning, fix your mind on Christ's cross, then bless yourself three times, repeat (" in devoute wyse ") your paternoster, Ave Maria, and the holy creed.

> Thenne alle the day the better shal ye spede.

Next, while you dress yourself carefully, say the matins of Our Lady. If you do this every day she will be sure to reward you. Comb your head and see you keep it clean. Don't let your ears get dirty, and see that not a spot is left upon your face.

> Purge your nose/lete naman in it see
> The vile mater/it is none honeste
> Ne with your bare honde/no filth fro it feeche
> For that is fowl/and an uncurtoys tecche.

Wash your hands ; look after your nails ; don't let them grow too long, and see that " they be not gety blacke ". Take special pains to draw your hose smooth, and make your gown and hood hang straight.

As you walk along the street speak pleasantly to people. Be demure and courteous. Be friendly to your comrades, and don't go along throwing sticks or stones at birds and animals. Don't be boisterous (" bewarre ye ne rage "), and don't go teasing a dog through field and street. Walk along sedately so that men may say,

> A goodly chyld ther passeth by the waye.

And when you come to church, kneel down meekly, and " knocke on your breste ". Before you rise say a paternoster and a creed. Beware while you are in church " of clappe or Jangelyng ". Keep silence and serve God with attention,

> Remembryng wel the lord above is he
> Whom to serve is grettest libertee.

When you speak, look men straight in the face, with a serious expression. A wavering eye is a sign of inconstancy.

Serving at table is very important. Watch those who have the greatest skill and try to follow their manner. Never be absent when you should be on duty. Watch the face of your master or sovereign. Often you can tell what he wants before he speaks.

Manners at table should also be given great care. Try not to talk too much, and never say anything to injure or disparage the absent. A gentleman doesn't annoy anyone present or absent. And don't eat as if you were ravenous ; wait awhile before beginning, and manage your food and drink so that no suspicion of gluttony may fall on you.

Be careful of your dishes and table linen. Wipe your lips before drinking, and don't blow in your cup or on your soup. Never scratch your face or your head at the table, for that is very bad manners indeed.

Avoid dipping your meat in the salt-cellar or stuffing your mouth too full. " Burnysshe no bones " with your teeth, for those are the manners of a dog and not at all courteous. Keep your lips closed while eating, don't laugh too much at the table, and don't pare your nails or pick your teeth with your knife. Never lean upon the table, or

> Yf I shal to you playnly saye
> Over the table ye shal not spetel conveye.

When you wash your hands, wash them so clean that you do not leave the towel " lothsom on to see ". For recreation choose games and sports that have a refining influence. Music of harp or lute, singing, graceful dancing, all make a lad more highly thought of. Reading " bookes enorned with Eloquence " gives both pleasure and learning. Gower, Chaucer, Occleve, and Lydgate—these have reaped the fields of their flowers, and we may glean after them.

Customs change from time to time ; so you must watch those who are most worthy of regard (pay no attention to fops or extremists), and adopt what seems admirable without aping too closely.

Above all things hold women in respect. Try to serve them courteously, and please them with your words and manners. The envoy, " Go lytil quayer ", closes with the words :

> Chyldren muste be of chyldly governance
> And also they must entretyd be
> With esy thing, and not with subtylte.

Having provided a work on the theory of the interrelations of all classes of society in the *Chess* moralized, and manuals for the guidance of boys in his editions of *Cato*, *Moral Proverbs*, and Courtesy books, Caxton put forth a book especially designed for " ladyes & gentilwymen ". In many respects this is the most interesting of all his books of this type. It was undertaken, he tells us,[9] at the request of a noble lady who had herself reared many " noble & fayre doughters ", and who for " very ziele " that learning and virtue might be increased among women urged him to translate this book from the French that all might " rede or here it ".

The French original was the work of a knight, Geffroy de la Tour Landry, who explains in his prologue that on a beautiful April morning, listening to the birds in his garden, he saw his daughters approaching. Since the spring influences had called up vividly memories of romantic escapades in his early life, he was seized with poignant anxiety for the temptations lying in wait for his own daughters, who were " yong and lytil, and dysgarnysshed of al wytte and reson ". At once he decided to make for them " a litil booke for to lerne to rede ", and fill it not only with teachings that would " shewe to them the right weye and true pathe ", but also with stories and examples so that they might always have in memory " somme good ensample for to flee the evylle and reteyne the good ".

The plan of the book is somewhat similar to that of the prose *Cato*, except that the abstract moral principles are made less obvious, and illustrations and examples are given much greater space.

Religion and religious observances occupy the first and most important place. Directions are given for morning devotions, prayers for the dead, fasts, and confession. A story of the Emperor's daughter who was saved and happily married because she said prayers faithfully while her careless sister met a shameful death, impressed one of these points. The sad fate of the young wife who refused to fast was intended to make gluttony and feasting for ever hateful.

The danger of levity is amply illustrated by many tales. One quaint section explains with force " how yonge maydens ought not to turn their heedes lyghtely here ne there ". Many of the tales depend for their point upon the principle which is taken for granted, that the greatest disaster that can befall girls is to " lese theyr maryage ".

The great danger to women of freedom of speech and bearing—no matter how innocent the intention is—appears in several tales. The third daughter of the King of Denmark was chosen to marry a great prince instead of her handsomer sisters because of her retiring manner. The " doughter of Aragon " also " lost her maryage " through " malapertenes ".

Very unpleasant tales are told of women who were " chyders or scoldes ", and of those who attempted to " stryve " with their husbands. But perhaps the danger most richly illustrated with warning examples is love of dress and personal adornment. The terrible fate " of the lady that blanked and popped her " and the one who " dispended the fourth parte of the day for to araye her " was calculated to dissipate by fear, while the quiet reasoning " Of them that take first newe gyses " might persuade by the force of logic. Quaintest, perhaps, of all these tales is " How Love Wylle Be Kepte Warme ", showing that a magnificent robe embroidered with precious stones on a wearer shivering with cold of a " colour dede and pale " is not so successful in love as a good warm gown with " mantell and double hood ", which gives its wearer " a good lyvynge colour ".

Unquestioning obedience to one's husband is inculcated through numerous examples. Of these, " How a Woman Sprange upon the Table ", with its naïve play upon a French word, is an interesting prototype of *The Taming of the Shrew*. Women are warned that they must not " telle the secretes of her husbondes ";

no woman should "ansuere to her husband whan he is wrothe", but she should "pease his yre". If, however, she should have an "evyl and felon husbond", she must not on that account be drawn from the service of God.

As a whole the book gives a surprisingly vivid picture of late mediæval ideas on women and domestic life among the upper classes.

But lords and ladies and their children were not the only public Caxton cared for. In his prologue to the *Book of Good Manners* he bewails the "condicions & maners of the comyn peple whiche without informacion & lerning ben rude and not manered lyke unto beestis brute". In accordance with the dying request of a special friend, William Pratt, a brother mercer of London, he translated and printed *Le Livre de Bonnes Moeurs*, written by Jacques Legrand, an Augustinian friar. It was the belief of Caxton and his "synguler frende" who brought him the book that its contents put into "englyssh, our maternal tonge," would do much "emonge the people for thamendement of their maners, and to thencrease of vertuous living".[10]

As a matter of fact, the book is much more of a religious treatise than a handbook of manners. Nor is it a brief treatise, for it contains five books, each of considerable length.

In the first the virtues that served as antidotes to the seven deadly sins are commended with fresh and vigorous similes, and many an example from Scripture and the Holy Fathers.

The Church and its people are then treated at length. Chivalry should protect the Church as mother to all Christian people. It should punish heretics, honour priests, defend the poor, and appease strife. The Church—symbolized by Noah's ark—is the priest's bride; he must have no other. His ring denotes loyalty, his tunic cleanness, his girdle chastity, his stole patience, and his chasuble charity. Churchmen must preach and teach the people, spreading as widely as possible the advantages of education, for the ignorant man " wote not what to do but yf he be in companye to here vanytees and lewd langages ".

Book III treats of " the state of lordes temporall and of alle chyvalrye ". Concrete illustrations are given of great princes moved by pity and mercy, of their gracious manners and attitude toward others. Terrible punishments are recorded of those who lacked these qualities (Pilate, Rehoboam, Saul). Knights must not be avaricious, but sober and chaste. They must maintain justice, set an example of honour (dice and games are unworthy of them), be unswervingly true, and hold their promises—no scraps of paper for them; in fact, a knight should be a man among a thousand.[11]

The commonalty furnishes the theme for the fourth and most important section. Rich men, old age—which should bring ripe wisdom and manners, " but many olde and aged ben of contrarye condiciouns " —young people, relations of children and parents (examples: young Isaac and the sons of Eli), and marriage, all receive ample attention.[12] Women are given minute directions how " to governe themself ", as maids, wives, and widows. Servants are shown their duties, parents are impressed with the importance of giving instruction and training to their children, and children are reminded of their duties to parents. An eloquent chapter deals with " marchants ", how they must observe " trouthe in weyght & in mesure ", and carry on without fraud or usury, " for otherwyse it is not marchandyse but deceyte ".

The section closes with a discussion of pilgrimages. This popular mediæval pastime—as it too often became—is given real charm of interpretation. Human life should be regarded as a pilgrimage, for just as trees transplanted grow higher and stronger, so the soul transported in contemplation of the other world grows and expands. The Christian should always remember that " he is not a pilgryme that alwey hath his herte on the contre that he cometh fro ".

The fifth book, dealing with death, is an orthodox treatment (with many illustrations) of this favourite, late mediæval topic.

Probably the same year (1487) Caxton printed the *Royal Book*, so named because " Holy Scripture calleth every man a king which wisely and perfectly can govern and direct himself after virtue ".[13] It, too, is translated and published " atte requeste of a worshipfull marchaunt & mercer of london " ; whether William Pratt or another we have no means of knowing.[14]

The general nature of the book is summarized in Caxton's prologue. Seven woodcuts, probably chosen from those prepared for the *Speculum of the Life of Christ*, enliven its various divisions. The Ten Commandments, the twelve articles of faith, the seven deadly sins, the seven petitions of the paternoster, the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit, and the seven virtues are glossed with full explanations. The elaborate analysis of each of the vices and virtues into branches, and then into boughs, is an interesting forerunner of the elaborate classification of fools later in Brandt's *Narrenschiff* and Barclay's *Ship of Fools*. A delightful presentation of the active and the contemplative lives is given under the figure of Martha and Mary.[15] Emphasis is laid on " mesure " (temperance) in one's own wit (be not presumptuous), in appetite, in words, in hearing, in clothing, and in manners.

Perhaps it is stretching a point to include Caxton's translation of the " Curial " of Alain Chartier in this chapter, and yet since ideals and plans for establishing oneself in life are the very essence of both morals and manners, this letter of the courtier to his young brother should take its place here. Caxton's prologue[16] is an apt summary of the letter, and although the ideas expressed are commonplaces of philosophical thought, his phrasing gives them piquancy. "Yf thou wylt use my counseyl", he makes the poet write, "Take none example by me for to poursewe the courtes . . . but allewey late my perylle be example to the for to fle and eschewe them".

Many of the "perylles" are described in detail, also the hardships and humiliations in this life of servitude which glitters only on the surface. Some of these suggest vivid pictures. "We ete so gredely & gloutonnously that otherwhyles we caste it up agayne and make vomytes". It is no place for a youth who loves to study or to read, for here "he shal muse ydelly alday in awaytyng that man shal open the dore to hym of the chambre . . . of the prynce". The peaceful sleep of his brother is contrasted with the inconvenience of Court life: "We after over moche drynkyng of wynes and grete paynes lye doun ofte in beddes ful of vermyne & somtymes with stryf and debate". Of real worth nothing can be gained, for "yf he studye for to fynde frendshyp, he shal never conne trotte so moche thrugh the halles of the grete lordes that he shal fynde her".

Clearly to Caxton and his public, no matter what interests life might offer an individual, or what his station might be, the most important aim was to make the "sowle inward" as familiar as possible with "thewes good", and to add to his social group a personality distinguished by "vertues in al wyse".

NOTES

1. Jacques de Cessolis was a Dominican preaching friar who, taking as a basis a Latin treatise of Egidius Romanus (Guido Colonna, d. 1316), entitled *De Regimine Principum*, presented the

various classes of society under the guise of chessmen. Evidently chess—an Oriental pastime which seems to have been spread through Europe by the advance of Islam—was as popular in the Middle Ages as the cross-word puzzle is at the time this is written. It is said that a Bishop of Florence was required to do penance for playing chess in public by three recitations of the Psalter, by washing the feet of twelve poor persons, and by giving them liberal alms.

For the pre-Caxtonian forms of this work, see Paulin Paris: *MSS. Fr. de la Bibl. du Roi*, vol. v, pp. 13 ff. and 62 ff.; Blades: *Biog. and Typ. of William Caxton*, pp. 174–5.

2. The popularity of Caxton's version is shown by the fact that a second edition followed in a few years. This was illustrated with woodcuts (reproduced in both the Figgins and the Axon reprints), which added much to the distinctive character of the book. Another important change in this second edition was the suppression of the original prologue dedicated to George, Duke of Clarence, who in the interval had met his death.

3. " This philosopher was so Juste and trewe that he had lever dye than to lyve longe and be a fals flatterer wyth the sayd kynge ". In illustration a long list follows of brave men put to death for refusing to sanction the cruelties of unjust rulers.

4. Her father, Italian physician to Charles V of France, had given her the best education possible. At fifteen she married Etienne du Castel, who left her early a widow. She supported her parents and three children by her pen. The Duke of Burgundy was one of her most generous patrons.

5. Since this work is practically inaccessible to-day (it is one of the rarest of Caxtons, and has been reprinted but twice: by Pynson in a volume of Chaucer, and by Wm. Blades—95 copies for presentation only) it is worth while to include a few of these couplets:

> " He that secheth often other to blame
> Yiveth right cause to here of him the same.
>
> Trewe gentilesse can be noon other thing
> But the palais where honneur is dwellyng.
>
> Service in Court is no seur heritage
> Hit failleth oft with litle avantaige.
>
> There is noo thing so riche I you enseur
> As the service of god oure createur.
>
> Though that the deeth to us be lamentable
> Hit to remembre is thing most convenable."

In connection with this last couplet, it is interesting to note that about the same time Lord Rivers translated *Les Quatres* *derrenières Choses*, which was printed by Caxton as *Cordyale or the four last thinges*. Soon after, Lord Rivers was beheaded by Richard III.

6. See Appendix, p. 236.

7. For full treatment of mediæval books on manners, see *The Babee's Book*, E.E.T.S., 1868.

8. *Stans puer ad mensam* is a translation (verse) from the Latin *Carmen Juvenile de Moribus Puerorum* of Sulphitius. Caxton's English edition before 1479, is the editio princeps, since the first known printed copy in Latin is that at Aquila in 1483. See Blades: *Biog.*, pp. 199–202.

9. See Appendix, p. 263.

For fuller details in regard to this work, cf. Blades and Miss Rawlings's edition of *The Knyght of the Towre*, pp. 199 ff.

Miss Rawlings gives only about half of Caxton's book. The Early English Text Society gives the entire work, but uses Caxton's translation only for passages lacking in the earlier one. I must beg to disagree with those who find the earlier (MS. Harl., 1764) translation " far superior ". In general it is smoother but with a weaker, roundabout effect. Although Caxton's style—as always with him—is uneven in quality, it is on the whole direct and more picturesque (perhaps much reading of Caxton and great fondness for Malory have prejudiced me). Typical passages from the two are:

CAXTON: It is a moche fayre thynge a man to have a wyf obeysaunt in alle thynges to her husband.

HARL.: It is a noble thinge a man to have a good wyf that obeieth and dothe his biddinge atte alle tymes.

CAXTON: He sayde the wymmen that were so horned were lyke the snayle that ben horned. . . . I doute, said he, that betwixt their hornes thenemye hath made his mansion & dwellynge.

HARL.: He said that the women were so horned were lyche horned snailes and hertis and unicornes.

CAXTON: I sawe a baronnesse ryght a hyghe and noble lady of lygnage the whiche as men saide blanked and popped or peynted herself. I sawe also hym that gaf to her every yere suche thynges wherwith she popped her, wherfore he toke yerely grete pension of her.

HARL.: I will tell you a tale that was tolde me of a lady that y knewe that folke saide she popped and farded her. And y sawe hym that folke saide that toke her the thinge that she dite so her selff with.

10. See Appendix, p. 277.

11. Gloomy glimpses of contemporary conditions are given. Instead of the " mesure, ordynaunce, and alle honeste " that should distinguish courts and castles, we are told :

> " But thou shalt fynde there now none order but fylthe and foul table clothes. And men whiche saye them self to be honneste, but they renne to the table shovyng and puttyng away eche other."
>
> " As to knights, the author doubts ' if a serche shold be made ' the possibility of finding many even with a suitable knowledge of their horses or with their ' harnoys & abyllements of warre redy.' "

12. " And meseemeth it is a grete abhomynacyon to see in many marryages so lytyl fayth and loyalte as now is. But I beleve that one of the causes emonge other is that the maryage is . . . made for money or other evyl cause."

13. See Appendix, p. 280 ff.

14. Apparently this is the third English translation of the very popular " Somme des Vices et des Vertus," or " La Somme du Roi," whose author is said to be " Frere Laurent de l'Ordre des prédicateurs et confesseur de Philippe le Hardi " (Blades : *Biog.*, pp. 322–4). The first translation in Kentish dialect, by Dan Michel, is published by the E.E.T.S. as " The Ayenbite of Inwit " (Prick of Conscience) ; the second—a bit later and anonymous—is in MS. Add. 17013.

15. " The fyrst lyf is the felde of good werkers where the knyghtes of god assaye and preve them. The second reste them with god in the chambre of clene conscyence. . . . The fyrst is a waye and entre to the second. For no persone may come to the lyf contemplatyf yf he be not fyrst wel proved in the lyf actif ".

16. Appendix, p. 270. The verses at the close, translated from a French ballade evidently considered by Caxton the work of Alain Chartier, are interesting as one of the few attempts of Caxton to versify. For comparison of this with the original, cf. Paul Meyer's collation in the reprint of the E.E.T.S. Extra Series, LIV, 1888, pp. 18–19.

CHAPTER VI

ALLEGORY AND SYMBOLISM

Where thrugh by redyng we may comfort us,
And wyth conceytes dyvers fede our mynde.

ONE of the most deep-seated instincts of man is interest in what awaits just round the corner of death. This interest is not confined to religion, nor is it lost in the din and complexity of modern life. Witness the words attributed to the late Charles Frohman just before the sinking of the *Lusitania*: " Why fear death ? It is the most beautiful adventure of life."

It is a far cry from this buoyant, unquestioning spirit of venture to the meticulous mapping-out of the soul's journey in the Egyptian *Book of the Dead*, and yet the instinct prompting each is the same. Identical with both in origin, yet different from either in expression, is the distinctively Christian *Pylgremage of the Sowle*, printed by Caxton in 1483.[1]

This popular, mediæval, religious romance purports to be a " full merveylous dreme " that came to the author as he lay " in a seynt Lawrence nyght slepyng ". The tale, though complete in itself, begins at the exact point where the preceding romance—the *Pilgrimage of Human Life*—broke off.

Death has struck his victim, and the soul, rising in the air, soon sees Satan, foul and horrible, advancing with fierce menaces. But a " fayr yongling of ful huge beaute " (his guardian angel) barred the way and, in spite of threats and arguments, leads the soul (Satan following close) to the Archangel Michael for judgment.[2] Interesting details are given of the journey, the " sodeyne syght of the hevenly joye " as the gate opened, and the horrible cries of the demons crowding without, demanding their victims who await judgment.

A large portion of the book is given to the trial. In spite of the fact that the procedure is closely modelled upon that of contemporary earthly courts, with a great deal of argument and theological doctrine, it by no means lacks interest. Personalities are made vivid by descriptive details and by characteristic words and actions. The fiends accuse the " provost " Michael of " favour of partye ". He calls in to counsel his " dere brother Cherubyn, porter of paradys " ; Peter, " porter of heven " ; Reason, Truth, and saints bringing the number up to twelve.

When the court is assembled, a trumpet is sounded and a proclamation read. Since on earth he has neglected to provide himself with a patron saint (as advocate), the soul must himself reply to the terrible indictment of Satan. His plea, " The pytous compleynt of the sowle ", is a poem of some extent.[3] He pleads that through all his deviations he has never lost sight of his true goal, nor in falling has he lost his scrip (faith) and his staff (hope). He appeals to Michael and each of the saints for help, with particular reliance upon Mary and Christ.

Justice speaks against him, and the outlook appears black. Worm of Conscience discovers many faults which even Satan has overlooked. A really dramatic situation—all in legal form and phrasing—presents the soul struggling against seemingly hopeless odds. Reason and Truth declare that the case is one without excuse, and Satan demands judgment.

But just as the Archangel makes ready to pronounce condemnation, Mercy appears and insists that the defendant should share the benefits of Christ's sacrifices and the sufferings of Mary. Reason acknowledges that it would not be fair to their " Soverayne Lord ", Christ, to deprive him of a follower without making sure that such action is an absolute necessity. Accordingly, they agree upon the ordeal of the great scales.

" Thenne upon a skaffold on hye " Justice appears with her balance. On one side are placed " al the merytes & good dedes " ; on the other " al the forfeyts & trespaces " of the pilgrim. The scrip and staff—all the merits the poor pilgrim possesses—are so light, that when Satan's great " bylle " of sins weighted down with Worm of Conscience " styrte into the balaunce ", the result is most disastrous : " smartely that other syde aroos, as nought hadde ben therin ".

Still Mercy is not discouraged. Begging for a brief reprieve, she is soon back with a " chartre of mercy ", which, added to the scrip and staff, " peysed anone so myghtely " that the other side " reysed up sodeynly as nought had be therynne ".

With great relief the pilgrim learns he is to be conducted by his guardian angel through the fires of purgatory until the " grete fylthe " of sin still attached to him is burned away. The hideous cries of Satan are now sweet to the soul, for they proclaim his escape from eternal woe.

The second book is an interpretation of the doctrine of purgatory. It contains more direct exposition than the first, but a thread of narrative is preserved. A great deal of vivid description testifies to the inevitable stirring of the mediæval imagination by the theme of punishment for sin. In addition to incidents similar to those in all vision literature on this subject is a debate (prose) between the body and the soul.

In Book III the soul is conducted by his guardian angel on a journey through hell. The fourth book is almost pure theology presented in symbolic form. The green tree and the dry tree—symbolizing man's redemption and fall or Mary and Eve (Ave and Eva)—hold a long debate. The Gospel of Nicodemus and the vision of Ezekiel are drawn upon. The green tree at last contributes her " lustye appyl " (Christ) for restoring the dry tree.

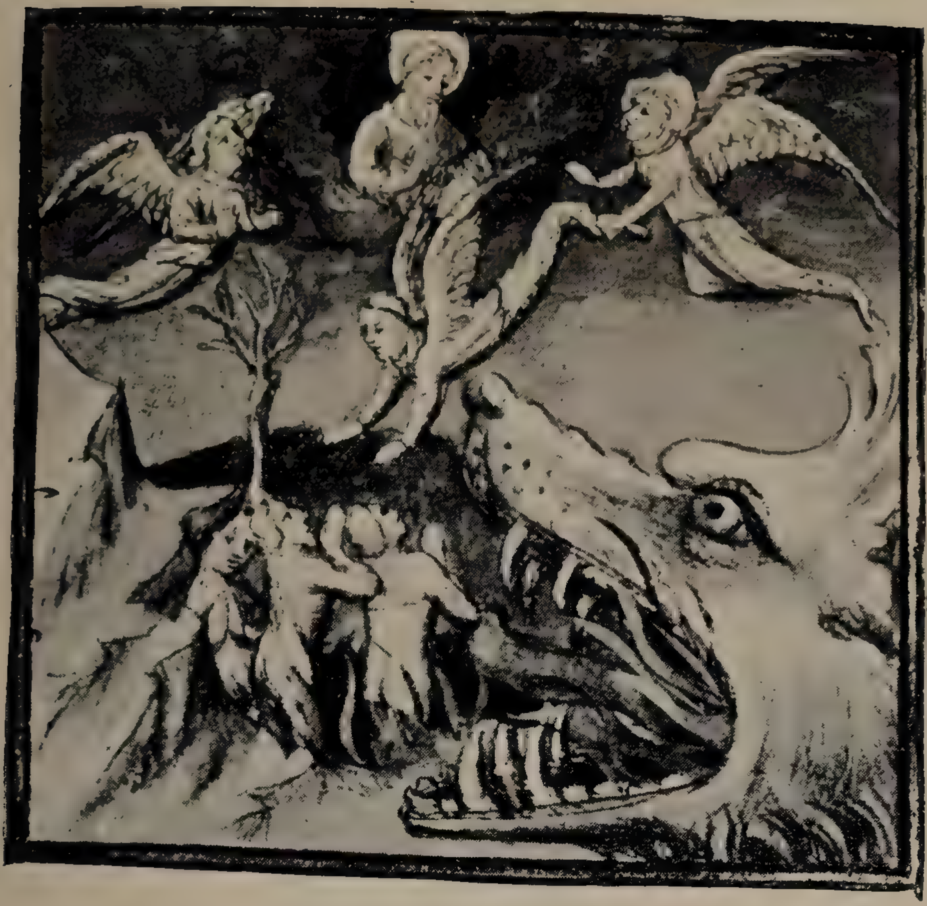
A quaint episode following this debate is that of " Doctryne lycking a sowle ". As bears must lick into shape their formless cubs, so this " lady syttyng in a chair havyng oute her tonge " (orthodox teaching) must give symmetry to the " fowle defourmed " soul. If the pilgrim had undergone this licking he would have escaped the torture of purgatorial flames.

The last book leads the soul through the heavenly spheres to bliss. The various " mansiouns " are described, and the " kalendre of heven " (model of the earthly calendar for the ecclesiastical year) is explained. A great musical gathering—David and angels—renders the " Songe of the natyvyte of oure ladye and other anthems ".[4]

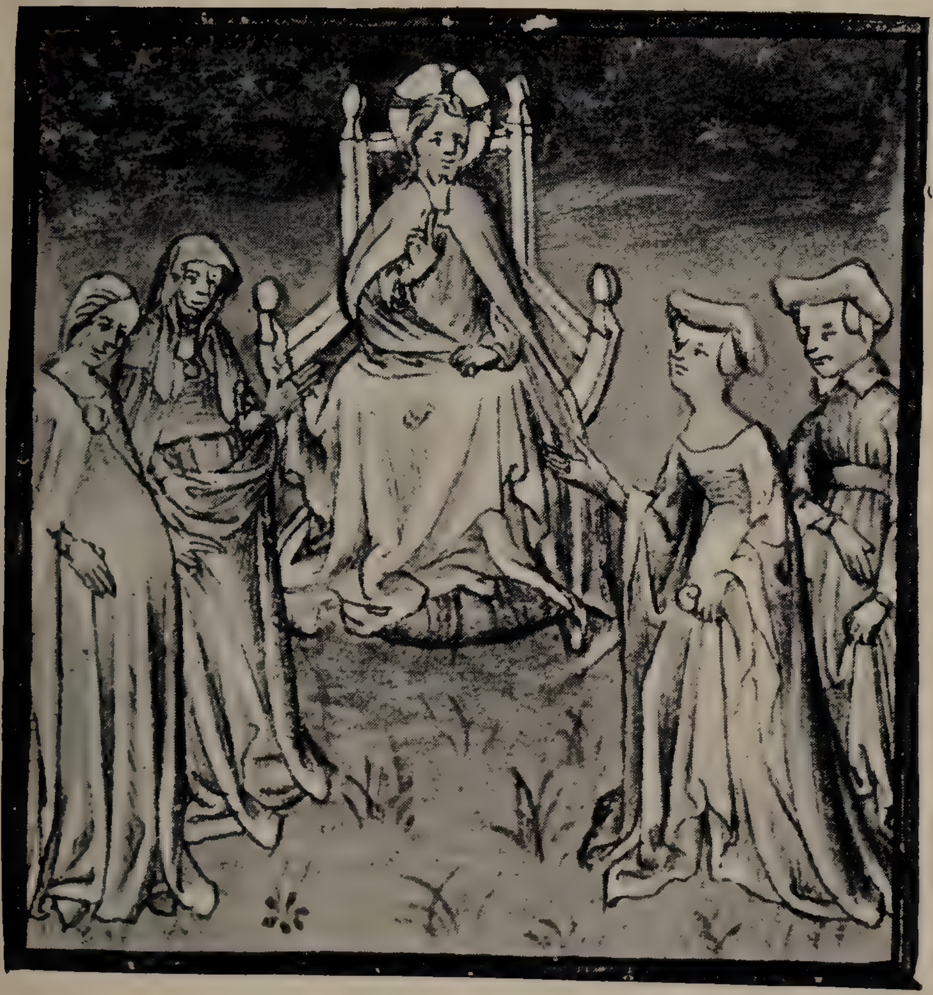
A presentation of the Trinity furnishes the climax. The angel explains that the pilgrim now has but to await the great judgment when, body and soul joined, he will live through eternity in the presence of the " hyhe Trynyte ".

At this word the angel flew away and a great light beat upon the eyes and awakened the pilgrim, who found himself lying in bed " ful sory " to leave so much happiness.

Another dream furnishes the framework of the *Court of Sapience*.[5] In this the spirit of a seeker of wisdom is freed by sleep, sets out through a dark, unknown forest until he comes upon " a mede moost hevenly ". Here a beautiful young woman (who



ANGELS INTERCEDING FOR SOULS
Brit. Mus. MS. Royal 20. B. iv. fo. 6
(*Original* 6.6 × 6.4 *mm.*)



THE CONTEST OF MERCY AND TRUTH BEFORE GOD
Brit. Mus. MS. Royal 20. B. iv. fo. 7
(*Original* 6.6 × 7.0 *mm.*)

explains that she is really very old) introduces herself as Sapience, and her two companions as Intelligence and Science. She explains that the dreadful place through which he has come is Worldly Occupation. He falls on his knees and vows to be her servant. She accepts him and begins his instruction.

A mighty Prince had one son and four daughters: Mercy, Truth, Right, and Peace. A servant who had disobeyed a royal command was sentenced to be put in prison, flayed, killed, and devoured. Mercy, horrified, strove to soften her father's ire. Her plea is a not unworthy prototype of Portia's appeal to Shylock.

But Truth objects, pointing out that law cannot be violated in a properly governed state without rigid execution of the penalty. Peace then appears—her charming presence described with loving detail—and reproaches Truth, asking if she wishes to exile Mercy and Peace, and make Death reign as queen. She pleads that without trespass Mercy would cease to exist, and that the evildoer should be given over to Mercy. Truth and Right refuse. Right kneels before the Prince, declaring she must award exact justice to good and evil—she must justify Truth.

At this point Sapience explains to her disciple that the Prince is God, His Son Christ, and His four daughters the moral principles so named. The servant is Adam. Once more she resumes her allegory.

Peace and Mercy bid sorrowful farewell to the realm that they must leave. In this "woful cas" the son sent hastily for Sapience and begged for counsel. Sapience admits that the land will be desolate without Mercy and Peace, but no reconciliation is possible that does not satisfy all four. The only solution is for the son to take the penalty upon himself. He, reluctant at first, finally offered himself to bring back Mercy and Peace. A reconciliation of the sisters followed. Mercy and Truth approached each other sith joy, while Right and Peace "togydre hertely kyst".

At the close of her symbolic presentation of Christian doctrine, Sapience leads the dreamer to her home on the bank of the river Quietness. A long passage enumerates the precious stones forming the river bank, with their virtues spiritual and medicinal—particularly the latter. This gives a fairly complete mediæval lapidary.

Dame Sapience expounds the virtues and properties of the water, which "passeth in renoun" all the "natures four", and wanders through paradise with perfect freedom. Nor are the fish—of which a long list is given—of less noble nature. And what shall we say of "that moost hevenly mede" through which it flows? A mediæval pen inevitably grows eloquent in describing a mead, and this one runs true to form. "The rose, the lyle, the vyolet"—with their various properties—are accompanied by the plants and trees familiar to the time. Naturally the birds follow, but although an enumeration is given, it is far from being a mere catalogue. Vivid pictures occur, each, of course, bearing a load of symbolic meaning.[6] Animals also abound. The well-known figures of the bestiary are given suitable setting, and shown living in harmony with other creatures.

But all this is merely a setting for the mansion itself, a "cumly castle shynyng bryght", with seven great towers set upon a rock in a bend of the river. "Seven ladyes bryght", followed by many others, met them at the gate. Faith, Hope and Charity led, with Prudence, Fortitude, Temperance, and Righteousness close behind. They "hertely gan kys" the lady Sapience, and as they are exchanging greetings the poet names and explains the dignities of the various ladies (virtues) in attendance upon each of the seven.

Passing through the gate, they find Dame Science presiding over the first court. Here natural philosophy is expounded by a group of illustrious men.[7] In the second court intelligence is enthroned, imparting knowledge, not conveyed by the senses, of the heavenly hierarchies explained by the Church fathers.

Still more impressive was the third court.

> Hit was an heven only to loke it on
> Soo ravyshyng it was and elegaunt.

The halls of Ilion were poor in comparison. Here presided Philosophy (wisdom) with her seven assistants: Grammar,[8] Dialetika, Rhetorica, Arsmetrica, Geometrica, Musica, and Astronomia. Much quaint and interesting detail is given in describing the " parlours " of these imposing ladies.

From the court of wisdom they visit the " wonyng place " of Dame Faith. Here Mary Magdalene and her sister Martha, the " hooly confessours ", and other martyred saints dwell with Purity, Devotion, Chastity, Loyalty, and Stability.

In order to make sure that the " redar or herer " shall not miss the lessons that the allegory is meant to convey, the printer adds four pages of (classified) Christian duties which " every Chrysten man and woman " is " holde and bounde " to learn and follow.

Similar to the above in title, but very unlike it in nature, is the *Doctrinal of Sapience*.[9] This is designed to do for the unlearned and simple people what the *Royal Book* and ingenious allegories effected for the noble and lettered. Not at all visionary, the symbolism it makes use of is of the most primitive type. In fact, it is simply a handbook of Christian doctrine richly illustrated with tales and examples, in which symbolism and allegory play a large part.

The twelve articles of faith are presented, each as the work of one of the twelve apostles. The " dyverse and derke jugemens " of God are explained by the tale of a hermit who accused God of injustice. An angel was sent who took him on a journey, in which they visited four houses. In the first a good host received them with great kindness. The angel rewarded him by carrying off his finest gold cup. The second host was a churlish fellow, who treated them most rudely. To him the angel gave the gold cup. Their third reception was even kinder than the first, the host sending a guide with them on their departure. This guide the angel threw from the first bridge, drowning him in the water. The fourth host, also, did everything possible for their comfort, except that they were annoyed by the crying of his child during the night.[10] Here the angel killed the infant before their departure.

The perplexity of the hermit at these strange proceedings was relieved at the end of their journey. The angel explained that the cup had been taken from the first man (who loved it too much) so that he might have greater joy hereafter; it had been given to the second as his only joy, since none awaited him beyond; the guide had been thrown from the bridge to prevent his carrying out a plan to murder his master next day; and the child had been removed because the father's heart was so set on him that the benevolence and deeds of mercy of former years were neglected, to the great danger of his soul.

The " passyon of our lord " is presented with great emotional power;[11] most poignant details are given of the crucifixion—too concrete for the modern mind. The cross is described as made of four woods: palm, cedar, cypress, and olive. For those who keep it in mind lechery and malice have no power. The numerous miracles related to illustrate this truth may have been taken literally, but what need is there to consider them otherwise than quaint allegories carrying home a truth to him " who a sermon flees "? Of these an interesting example is the nun who swallowed a tempting bit of lettuce without first making the sign of the cross. A little devil sitting on it and swallowed in her careless haste poisoned and tormented her long, until she was finally delivered of him by a holy man.[12]

Patience in tribulation and "Werkes of mercy corporelle" are commended through many examples. One story movingly told is of a lady who cared for a leper, putting him in the bed of her absent lord. He, returning unexpectedly, insisted on going to bed. Next morning, to the great astonishment of his wife, he praised her for the unusual comfort and perfume of his bed. Overcome by the miracle, she confessed her deed, "And when he understode it he was so constrayned that he whyche was to fore fiers as a lyon was softe & debonayr as a lomb."

Here, too, is the long narrative of Peter the changer, so popular in collections of mediæval tales. And stories no less striking are used in the expositions of the Ten Commandments. To impress the importance of Sabbath observance we are told of a woman who on the sacred day "haunted the daunces, and moche gladly daunced and songe and arrayed her self merveyllously of ryche and fayre clothing and Jewellys". Once when thieves seized and wished to rob her, they were beaten off by the devil, who couldn't afford to have her disturbed—she was doing too much for him.

Respect for father and mother is instilled by the example of the son who refused his parents shelter and food. When he later tried to eat, a monstrous toad fastened itself on his upper lip and remained until the Pope granted him absolution.

Control of the senses is taught under the allegory of the "five wyttes of Nature". The body is a castle to keep well the soul, that precious daughter entrusted to it by the King of Heaven. The apocalyptic beast of St. John furnishes symbolism to enlarge upon the hideousness of the seven deadly sins.

Evidently pride in a good voice was a besetting sin of young priests, for a number of naïve tales impresses this danger.[13] The sin of laughing and talking in church is illustrated by the story of St. Brice, who laughed aloud while St. Martin was singing mass. He explained that his eyes were suddenly opened to see the devil busily recording the unbecoming behaviour of those in attendance. Running out of parchment, and anxious not to miss any of the sinful levity, he tried to stretch the parchment with his teeth, but it flew out of his hand, giving him such a smart slap in the face that St. Brice could not restrain his laughter.

Many of the popular miracles of the Virgin are made use of in this section. The sacraments are explained, and the importance of "houseling" or receiving Mass in the proper spirit. The great danger of making mistakes through carelessness in saying devotions is illustrated by the story of the hermit who met the devil carrying a great sack. In response to the hermit's curiosity the Great Adversary explained that the sack was filled with words, syllables, and letters "forgoten & evyl sayd" by Christians in their devotions.

But not all the tales are amusing; some are horrible. Fear was an emotion much played upon, although an attempt is made to balance the vivid pictures of purgatory and the day of doom by descriptions of the joy of heaven.

Very homely and quaint is this allegorical teaching of simple, unlettered people, but it carried to the poor and ignorant the emotional message that literary symbolism conveyed to men of culture and learning.

NOTES

1. The original of this work was a fourteenth-century poem by Guillaume de Guilleville, *Le Romant des Trois Pélerinages*, i.e., of human life, of the soul, and of Jesus Christ. Jehan de Gallopes, chaplain of John, Duke of Bedford, made from the second part a prose paraphrase, from which in turn the English translation was taken. Recent critics reject the claim that this translation was the work of Lydgate (cf. MacGracken : *The Minor Poems of John Lydgate* (E.E.T.S., Extra Series, No. XVII), p. xliii.

2. This conception of Michael as filling the office of Osiris in the Book of the Dead seems to have been a favourite theme in mediæval church decoration (cf. reprint of *Pilgrimage of the Soul*, by K. I. Cust, 1859, p. 83).

3. The form of this translation is the chant-fable so well known through its use in *Aucassin and Nicolette.* The narrative sections are in prose, but highly emotional passages are expressed in verse.

4. These songs are given in full (five besides the one in praise of the Virgin), each poem in its appropriate place accompanying the explanation of the various festivals of the Church year.

5. The traditional ascription of this poem to Lydgate is at present not accepted. For evidence see MacCracken : *Minor Poems of Lydgate* (E.E.T.S., Extra Series, No. CVII), p. xxxv, and Blades, *Life*, etc., vol ii, p. 115.

6. The peacock (symbol of immortality) may serve as illustration:

> " The proud pecok his tayle began to whele
> On which the sparkyng sonne so puerly brent
> That to the syght he semed every dele
> An Archangel doune from the heven sent.
> Al hevenly colours in heven were content.
> His tayl the floures the byrdes eke ywys
> The eye the nose the ere fode with al blys."

7. These names, headed by Aristotle and closing with Ypocras (Hippocrates), are already familiar to Caxton's readers through the *Dictes and Sayings of the Philosophers.*

8. Grammar is helped by " Dame Ortographye, gentyl Ethymologye, Dyasyntastica, and Prosodye ". " Dame Astronomye " has with her " the mayd Astrologye ", whose activities, though sometimes " kyndely and precious ", are warned against as too often " over moche superstyous ". Socrates and Aristotle are praised " notwythstandyng they were not of our fayth ", for pointing out the error of believing that stars ruled the destinies of man.

9. This was translated by Caxton from a French version, made in turn from the Latin *Manipulus Curatorum*," a fourteenth-century compilation. See Blades : *Life*, vol. ii, p. 200.

10. "a lytel yong chyld whyche cessed not of alle the nyght to crye & to braye in suche wyse that they myght not slepe". One feels that the worthy priest who introduced the story has undergone a similar experience in accepting hospitality, and feels a certain degree of sympathy for the angel's summary method of dealing with the situation.

11. Note how class distinction is used to heighten emotional effect in the appeal:

> "O devoute persone consydere and beholde that it is a grete despyte to spytte in the face of a knight And yet more grete in the visage of an Erle or of a duke but it shold be over grete despite to spytte in the vysage of a kynge O lord god O what confusion was it to spytte with the stynkynge mouthes of so felon Jewes in the face of the kyng of glorye."

12. Among the numerous illustrations of reverence for the cross is given the anecdote of St. Louis, who in passing over a bridge always repeated—if it were of wood—"I fear not to pass for our Lord was crucified on a cross of tree"; or—if of stone—"I fear not to pass for our Lord's sepulchre was stone." "And thus he passed alwey surely."

13. One of these tells of a young Cistercian monk "whiche was prowd which lyfte up his vois above the other". The young men followed him and their elders humbly fell silent. Fire came from the mouth of the presumptuous youngster and leaped upon the others burning them. Another depends for its effect too much on the quaintness of phrasing to be spoiled by paraphrase.

> "It is redde of a symple woman that ofte wente to the chyrche. The preste of the chirche had a right evyl vois. And allewey whan he songe this woman wepte. The preeste sawe that she wepte and had supposed that she wepte for his faire syngyng, and enforced hym to synge the more hyer and lowde: and more strongly that he songe, the more the woman wepte. The preste myght not lenger tarye but wente to her to demaunde wherfore she wepte in the chyrche whan he songe. Alas syre, said she, I ought wel to wepe. For I hadde an asse that dyde to me moche good labour whom I have loste, and me semeth whan I here you singe that it is he."

CHAPTER VII

SPIRITUAL EDIFICATION AND DOCTRINE

They shall grow not old
As we that are left grow old.
Age shall not weary them,
Nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun,
And in the morning,
We will remember them.

THIS memorial inscription freshly carved at the entrance of the British Museum testifies to the regard of the modern Englishman for the *Arte and Crafte to knowe Well to Die.*

Expressed in a different manner, this was the great concern of Caxton's age. Two editions, thus Englished from the Latin *Ars moriendi*, were published by Caxton: one the year of his own death, and the other the year preceding.[1]

Since everything mortal must end, and everything good and well-made ends well, it is important that a man live so that he shall come to a good end. This treatise is made short, states the introduction—Caxton had " abredged " as well as translated it—so that one may grasp it quickly and easily while he has health and reason.

The work contains six sections. The praise of death shows, first, that its terror comes entirely from a material point of view. To a good Christian it is pure joy, and its contemplation leads to the kind of life that characterizes a true Christian.

Temptations at the hour of death come in five forms: doubts, or heresies;[2] despair—more displeasing to God than any sin truly repented;[3] impatience (the pain of dying should be regarded as purgatory leading to eternal joy); complacence or spiritual pride—the devil's pet method for ensnaring the devout; and over-great pre-occupation with worldly affairs or earthly loved ones.

The demands and questions that should be made to the dying are given in sufficient detail to put to flight "all the temptacyons of the devyll and his ryghte subtyl awaytes and fallacies". The religious instructions to be given at the death-bed are set forth (spiritual medicine should always precede and accompany bodily.)

The remembrance of what God has done and suffered for us is the theme of the fifth section, and the sixth is made up of the orisons and prayers to be said. A final paragraph emphasizes the importance of learning to die well—a true art or craft as it is presented.[4]

Although this particular work was not printed until the closing years of his life, the subject was one of the first to occupy Caxton's press. Before he left Bruges a volume was printed—either by him or by Colard Mansion—entitled *Les quatre Derrenieres Choses advenir*.[5] And one of the early volumes from his press at Westminster was Lord Rivers's English translation of this: the *Cordyale or the Four Last Things*.[6]

The four things which this work urgently recommended for contemplation are: death, the day of doom, hell, and heaven.[7] An eloquent discourse on the levelling power of death and the salutary effect of constant reflection upon it is supported by many examples and quotations from authorities. A terrible list of things that will accuse the sinner at doomsday is followed by an exposition of the dreadful reckoning and strict account to be given for every evil deed. No man, not even the most holy, can foretell the nature of the judgment to be given him.

In the third section the power of concrete imagery reaches its height. " Thinfernalle gehenne " with all its gruesome details, " y^{e} peinful places of hell " ; and " the strange & diverse maners of the tormentes of hell " are given a convincing effect by citing Scripture and Holy Fathers to support each detail.

No effort is spared to make the last section, devoted to heaven, equally vivid. All descriptive phrases obtainable are brought from sacred writings to develop a conception of its " beaute & cleanesse ". The charm of its " goodnesse " is emphasized with multiplied details, and the " traitys " comes to a close with a pæan of lyric prose celebrating the " Joye and blis that is therein everlastingly ".

But the *Myrroure of the blessyd lyf of Jhesu Chryste* was the most important of Caxton's purely religious publications. One of the greatest books of the late Middle Ages, it had a profound influence not only upon the thought, but upon all forms of the art of that period. The author, St. Bonaventure, is said to have owed his life—when four years old he was seized by an illness so serious that physicians said he must die—to the prayers of St. Francis of Assisi. Ever after he was very dear to St. Francis, who, just before dying, predicted with prophetic rapture the great rôle he was to play in the Church, and cried out : " A Buona ventura " ! From this time he was known as Bonaventure instead of John, his baptismal name. Humility is the distinguishing feature of his character, although it seems to have been marked by all the Christian virtues.[8]

Jean de Gallopes, the same who made the French prose *Pélerinage de l'Âme*, translated Bonaventure's

Speculum vitæ Christi into French prose, from which was taken the English version by Nicholas Love, Prior of the Carthusian house of Mount Grace de Ingelby, Yorks. In 1410 this translation was presented to Archbishop Arundel.[9] How the manuscript came into Caxton's hands we do not know, but it is interesting to note in connection with this name that William, Earl of Arundel, in 1484, was the patron who enabled him to carry through his great work on the Golden Legend.

Bonaventure's life of Christ is not a continuous history, nor is it a commentary with exposition of the Gospels ; rather it is a series of meditations on selected portions and incidents. The beginning and close of the Saviour's life receive microscopic attention ; no detail is too small for significance, but from the intermediate events of his career a selection only is treated.

His method is to direct the thought with intense contemplation upon the spirit of Christ as manifested in various phases of its human expression. In every way he endeavours to produce the effect of the actual presence of the scene contemplated. We are made not only to understand but to feel it emotionally. And he does not limit himself to what is actually recorded, but adds the glowing warmth of his own mystic vision, giving his conception of what probably happened at the same time. Many have regarded these additions as given directly by the revelation of the Holy Spirit, and to this power of spiritual illumination is due his popular title of the seraphic doctor.[10]

Two editions of this important work were issued, very fully illustrated with woodcuts.

Other religious works from Caxton's press were doctrinal, or manuals for devotional service of various types. It is extremely difficult for a modern mind to appreciate the vital importance imputed to right doctrine and to the letter-perfect use of the devotional service fitted to each occasion in mediæval Christianity. The story of Satan and his carefully treasured burden of errors made by Christian worshippers and the urgent warnings against doubts, together with the carefully detailed catechism and devotional service for the passing soul, are indications of the great value attributed to them. Doubtless nothing so justified the new art of printing in the eyes of Caxton and his supporters in the precincts of Westminster Abbey as the great number of books of this type which he put forth.

One rather rare collection known to-day as *A Book of Divers Ghostly Matters*[11] is made up of what was evidently (from the signatures) intended for three separate publications. The first and longest of these (forty-eight leaves, or ninety-six pages) is " y^{e} seven poyntes of trewe love and everlastyng wysdom drawen oute of y^{e} booke y^{t} is writen in latyn and cleped Orologium sapiencie ". The second treats of the twelve profits of tribulation (thirty-two leaves or sixty-four pages), and the third is a translation into English of the Rule of St. Benedict.

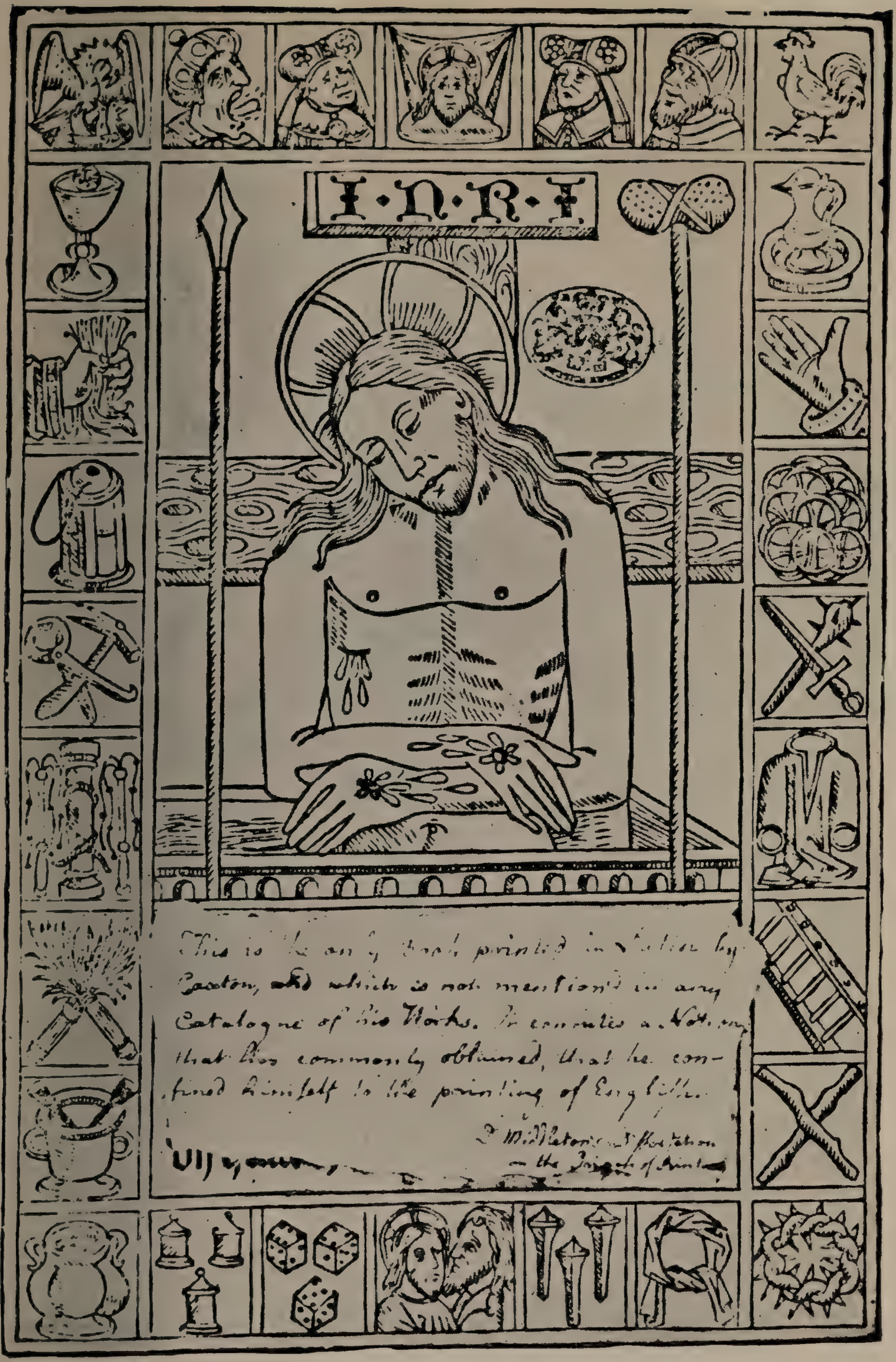
Two groups of prayers and a psalter were made available for the use of laymen. *Death-bed Prayers* consists of two prayers, in English, evidently for use by or for the dying.[12] *The Fifteen Oes*, known only through a unique copy in the British Museum, is so called from the fifteen prayers all beginning with O, which occupy the first eight leaves.[13] This—the first known English translation—was published at the desire of the Princesses Elizabeth and Margaret, wife and mother respectively of King Henry VII. The decorations of this work make it of special interest. It has a woodcut border around each page, woodcut initials, and a wood-engraving of the crucifixion of more artistic merit than Caxton's other cuts.

The *Psalterium*, in Latin, containing also the Canticles, Te Deum, Athanasian Creed, and a general Litany, is known through a single copy in the British Museum. It evidently belonged to Queen Mary I of England, for her initials are stamped on the cover.[14] Included in this group also—although it really is a special form of indulgence—is the *Image of Pity*, a figure of Christ on the cross surrounded by a border made up of small squares, each typifying some feature of Christ's passion. An inscription below offers 35,704 years of pardon to all who "pyteously beholdyng" the image shall devoutly say five paternosters, five aves, and a credo.[15]

Several other series of indulgences were printed by Caxton.[16] These were issued for the purpose of raising money to protect Europe from the Turks. For the clergy also was published a number of service books in Latin. These included various editions of the *Horæ ad usum Sarum*,[17] the *Directorium Sacerdotum*,[18] the *Ordinale secundum usum Sarum*,[19] the *Festum transfiguratione Jesu Christi*,[20] the *Festum visitatione B.V. Mariæ*,[21] the *Commemoratio lamentationis Beatæ Mariæ*,[22] and (printed not by but for Caxton by Maynyal of Paris) a *Legenda* and a *Missale secundum usum Sarum*. This last was the first book in which appeared Caxton's large device.

Other books primarily for ecclesiastical use were the *Infancia Salvatoris*[23] (in Latin), and two editions in English of *Quattuor Sermones*.[24] These homilies were probably published to meet the need of priests who were required to read the commination (included with the sermons), and to preach at least once every three months.

Some idea of the great service the new press rendered to the Church may be gained from the preceding list of works, which is probably by no means complete. Some of these have been discovered by



This is the only Book printed in Latin by Caxton, and which is not mention'd in any Catalogue of his Works. It contradicts a Notion that has commonly obtained, that he confined himself to the printing of English.

Dr Middleton's Dissertation on the Origin of Printing

THE IMAGE OF PITY

chance in fragments, and several exist only in unique copies. It is well to remember that before the Press became so closely associated as it is in our minds with the Reformation it was well established as a powerful auxiliary of the earlier form of orthodox religion in England.

NOTES

1. This appears to have been a very popular book. It had previously been printed (1483) in Latin by Guy Marchand at Paris, and in French by Vérard in Paris, and by Colard Mansion in Bruges. See Blades: *Biog.*, p. 357.

2. A safety device recommended as " moche prouffytable " was to repeat " wyth an hye voys " the creed and other symbols of the faith to discourage the devils lying in wait.

3. Numerous examples are given of " grete synners & horryble ", who through hope became saints and dear to God.

4. " And therfore to every persone that wel and surely wyl deye, is of necessyte that he lerne to deye or the deth come and prevente hym."

5. The author of the Latin *De quatuor novissimis* is uncertain. It was translated into French by Jean Mielot, one of the scribes employed by Philip of Burgundy.

6. See Caxton's Epilogue, Appendix, p. 278.

7. " And if peraventure we find therein ony cause of grouge . . . stirring us to unmesurable feer . . . late us take hit alweys to the beste entente having no dispeir in our lordes mercy for it is infenite."

8. Two anecdotes illustrate his humility in a striking way. Pope Alexander summoned him and his intimate friend Thomas Aquinas at the same time to receive the dignity of the doctor's cap. Each was so humble that he insisted that the other should take precedence, and it was only after a severe struggle that St. Thomas yielded and received first the degree. Again, when two Papal nuncios were sent to summon Bonaventure for the purpose of making him a cardinal and Bishop of Albans, he was found in his Franciscan tunic and knotted girdle washing the plates of his brethren after their meal. Such tales as these of characters most admired must be remembered in connection with the elaborate Court ceremony and etiquette of the age which made reluctance of assuming dignity and desire to give place to others—at least in appearance—a requirement of good breeding. It should be particularly kept in mind in connection with authors' deprecatory remarks about their own " symplenes " or " imperfyghtnes ".

Such references in the case of Caxton at least have often been taken entirely too seriously.

9. See Blades: *Biog.*, pp. 316 and 328. L. F. Powell: *Mirrour of the Blessed Lyf of Jesu Christ.*

10. An interesting comparative study might be made of Bonaventure's *Speculum*, and Papini's *Life of Christ.* The same lyric quality of high emotion marks both.

11. Blades: *Biog.*, pp. 350–1. " This is the book generally considered to have been the last printed by Caxton " (Duff).

12. Blades: *Biog.*, pp. 285–6.

13. Blades: *Biog.*, pp. 352–4. Henry Bradshaw: *Collected Papers*, " The Fifteen Oes ". In this paper is given the evidence that Caxton published another book with wood-cut borders (now lost).

14. Blades: *Biog.*, pp. 243–4.

15. Blades: *Biog.*, p. 324. Henry Bradshaw: *Collected Papers*, pp. 184 ff. (full discussion of this type of indulgence).

16. Blades: *Biog.*, pp. 222, 254.

17. Blades: *Biog.*, pp. 191, 242, 321, 332.

18. Blades: *Biog.*, pp. 319, 375.

19. Blades: *Biog.*, p. 241.

20. Blades: *Biog.*, pp. 330–2.

21. Blades: *Biog.*, p. 267.

22. Blades: *Biog.*, p. 329.

23. Blades: *Biog.*, p. 207. A reprint of this was published by F. Holthausen (Halle) in 1891, from the unique copy in the Royal University Library, Göttingen.

24. Blades: *Biog.*, pp. 265–7, 358. A valuable discussion of early printed service books (Caxton's in particular) is the monograph of E. G. Duff, *The First Edition of the Sarum Primer* (1908).

CHAPTER VIII

LIVES OF SAINTS

Thenne all that cause the goode contynuance
And helpe suche werke in furtheryng to their myght,
Ben to be sette in goode remembraunce ;
For such deserve reward of God all might.

IN no respect is the change made by the Reformation more sharply marked than in the attitude towards saints, their relics, and pilgrimage to their shrines. The feeling expressed by Erasmus in his *Colloquies*—of biting satire against the social abuses tolerated under the cloak of piety and the extravagant tales sanctioned by representatives of the Church—was shared not only by Sir Thomas More, but by many other devout Catholics. It is not fair to credit—or to blame—Protestantism entirely for this change of attitude, for it was present to a marked degree within as well as outside orthodox Catholicism.

Protestantism, however, did make the change much more sweeping ; in fact, it may almost be said to have hacked down the tree in its efforts to clear away parasitic growths.[1] At the present time signs are not lacking to indicate a general revival of interest in the history of the saints and in their legends.[2] But even so, the greatest difficulty to be overcome by the modern person wishing to understand mediæval life and thought lies in the changed mental attitude still existing toward this subject.

For this reason acquaintance with the great mediæval collections of saints' lives is of special value to one who cares for mediæval architecture, painting, or literature. And of all collections the *Legenda Aurea* of Giacomo di Voraggio is universally ranked first. As Caxton has stated, both in his prologue and in his colophon: "For in lyke wyse as golde is moste noble above al other metalles, in lyke wyse is thys legende holden above al other werkys."[3]

A glance through the bibliography of this work in the British Museum catalogue illustrates in concrete form how the pendulum of popular interest has swung. Disregarding the great number of manuscripts known, there are more than fifty editions (Latin and various vernacular tongues) printed in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. From 1554, however, for a period of nearly three hundred years, not a single edition is noted. Then appears the text of Graesse, 1846, followed in 1850 by a second printing. Since this time translations, adaptations, and selections have appeared to an extent that suggests a return of its former popularity.[4]

Caxton's version is by no means a mere translation. It is the most compendious of any known form of the *Golden Legend*. Pronounced by Gordon Duff "his most important work", it was without question the most laborious and extensive. He tells us himself that, "In maner halfe desperate to have accomplisshed it", he would have been unable to complete the undertaking but for the encouragement and practical aid of the Earl of Arundel.[5]

Of all his works as editor this seems to be the most independent and original. He tells us that he made use of three versions: Latin, French, and English; but in addition to these sources we find much else. The "Bible stories" which he introduced form so important a section that "the *Golden Legend* of Caxton was included in the list of Bibles at the Caxton celebration (1887)", says Mr. Henry Stevens, who had charge of that department, " because it contains a translation into English of nearly the whole of the Pentateuch and a great part of the Gospels ".[6] In this work, too, we have more material interpolated from Caxton's own experience and observation than in any other of his books.[7]

The structure of the original work gives evidence that it was intended for actual use in church services.[8] The sermons for special occasions other than saints' days (when, of course, the saint's life served as sermon) are models of clear structure, whose headings of mathematical precision not even the most wool-gathering mind could miss. The abstract points are made vivid by free use of anecdote and allusion, and by bringing out symbolic meanings to an extent that seems to a modern mind almost humorous. A good illustration of all these characteristics is the sermon devoted to the " Dedicacion of the chirche ".

As to the Bible translations, Caxton's title for this section indicates his method : " Here folowen the storyes of the byble." It is very clear from the accompanying directions that the passages chosen are those required by the liturgical use of the Church. He gives Adam, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, the Ten Commandments, Joshua, Samuel, Saul, David, Solomon, Rehoboam, Job, Tobit, and Judith. He not only includes apocryphal books, but he also introduces apocryphal material in the canonical stories—the incident of Seth's journey to paradise to get the oil of mercy for his father, Adam, may be cited as an instance. He even brings in matter that he has heard in personal conversation. In the life of David he inserts an account of the way in which the Psalmist composed the *miserere* psalm, a story that he heard " as I ones was by yonde the see rydyng in the companye of a noble knyght Syr John Capons ". He tells us of the learning and the high positions held by this noble knight, then gives the tale, ending with, " Thus thys noble man told me rydyng bytwene the toun of Gaunt in Flaundres and the toun of Bruxellis in Braband."[9] Such treatment gives a surprisingly fresh and vivid effect to the Bible stories.

But it is the lives of the saints and martyrs that give the work its distinctive character. The French version of Jean de Vignay[10]—which apparently served as the groundwork for Caxton's—contained about thirty-five French and continental saints not in the Latin of di Voraggio. To these Caxton added a life of St. Rocke, which he tells us he translated from the Latin (some non-*Legenda* text), and nineteen English saints not found in French or Latin.

Most of these saints are introduced by passages giving the etymology or symbolical significance of their names.[11] Sylvester is interpreted as from *silve* or *sole* "whyche is lyght" and *terra* "the erthe", and means "the light of therthe that is of the chyrche"; or it may be from *silva* and *trahens*, meaning "drawyng wyld men unto the fayth"; or again, it may mean "umbrouse or shadewous—full of bowes emong the trees of heven".

Agatha is derived from *hagios*, holy, and *theos*, God—that is to say, the saint of God; or it may be from *a*, without; *geos*, earth; and *theos*, God—a goddess without earth; or possibly *aga*, speaking, and *thau*, perfection—" spekyng and accomplysshyng moche parfyghtly" (as appeared in her answers); or, again, *agath*, service, and *thaas*, sovereign—" she sayde that servage is soverayn noblesse".

George comes from *geos*, earth, and *orge*, tilling—he was a tiller of the earth (his flesh); or from *geras*, holy, and *gyon*, wrestler, for he wrestled with the dragon; or perhaps *gero*, pilgrim, *gir*, "detrenchyd out", and *ys*, a councillor, for he was a pilgrim in the world, was cut in martyrdom, and gave good counsel.

The lives themselves contain more charming passages and quaint conceits than any brief survey can suggest. There is the delightful tale of St. John the Almoner, who had all the beggars in his diocese enrolled as his lords and benefactors, because he hoped through giving the alms they required to gain entrance to heaven. There, too, is his rich friend who, seeing the good patriarch with only " vyle clothes " for his bed—he had given everything valuable away—sent him " a moche riche couvertour ". St. John sold this, and used the money for alms. Seeing it in the market next day, the rich friend bought it and gave it once more to the Bishop, with the same result. The third time, in reply to the remonstrances of his friend, St. John explained that he could not sleep under the rich cover. Continually he thought, " A lord, how many of my lordes now in the myre, how many in the rayn, how many so colde that theyr teeth beten to gydre—and thou wretche—restest in thy chambre wyth thy wyckednesse under a couvertour of xxvi pound to warme thy carayn." Not to be outdone, the rich man declared he would buy as often as the patriarch sold, and so the " couvertour " continued in circulation, to the great profit of the bodies of the beggars and the souls of the two friends.

Following the adventures and noble accomplishments of St. Marcial, we learn that he was the same child, " as some saye, on whome our Lord layed hys honde—whan the contencyon and stryffe was emonge the apostles whyche of theym shold be grettest in the royame of heven ". Placing the child Marcial in their midst, he said, " Yf ye be not lytyl and humble as this childe is ye shal not entre in to heven. He that shal be leste emonge you, he shal be grettest in my royame."

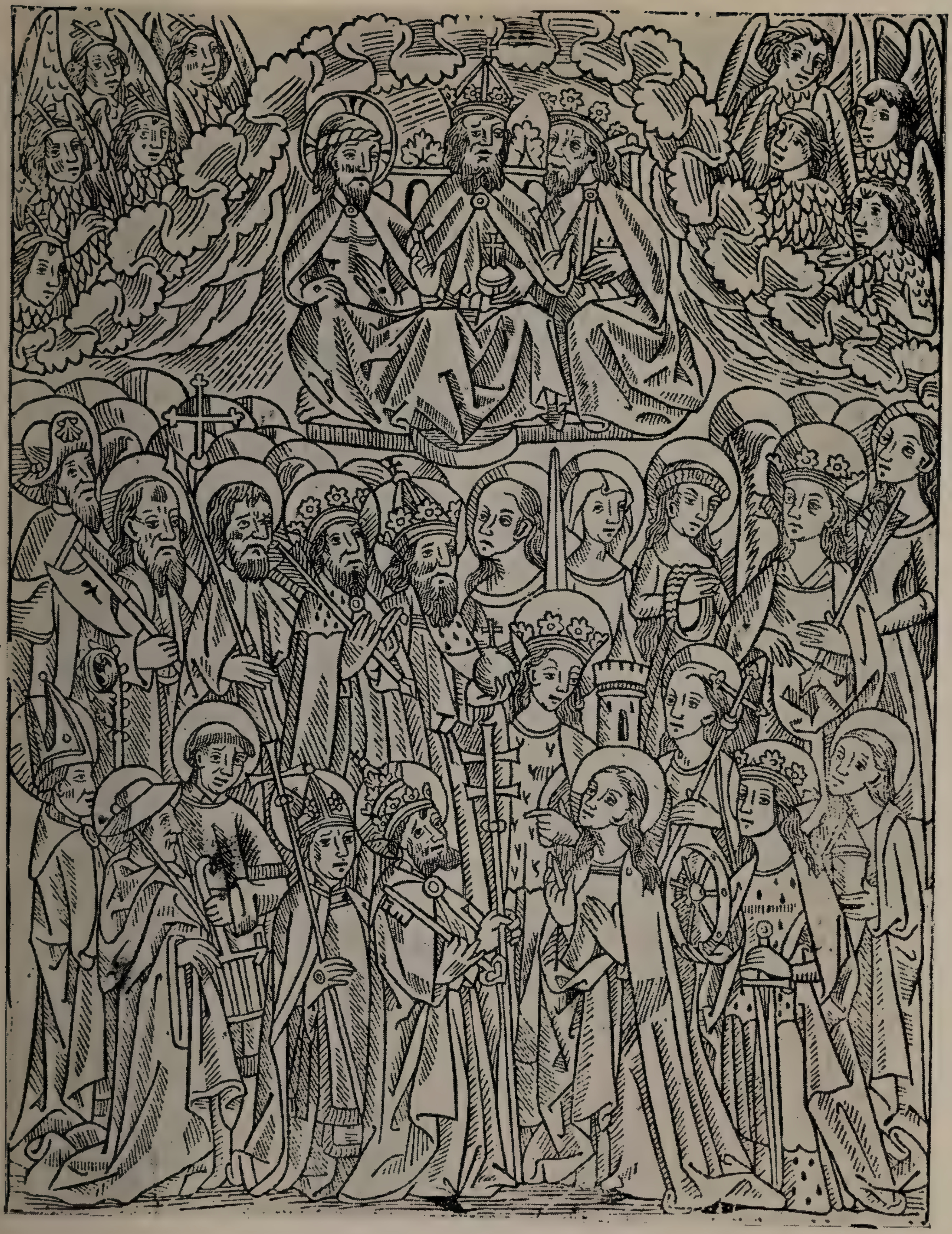
Mary Magdalene, identified with the sister of Martha and Lazarus, is the central figure of a story full of romantic details. Martha, who was " right facound of speech ", overcame the tarasque, a terrible dragon of the Rhone, and founded the Church of Tarascon. The description of this feat is particularly vivid. St. Margaret and St. George also overcome horrible dragons. St. George appears as the leader of the Crusaders, and is given one of Caxton's original paragraphs explaining his office as patron Saint of England and of the Order of the Garter.

Examples can give but the merest suggestion of the romance and adventure contained in the tales. And they are equally rich in homely and picturesque detail. There is the nun " whiche held hyr contynent of her flesshe but she eschewed not the janglerye of her tonge ", and the man who " was sore vexed wyth toothake, and he attouched this wode " (a beam from the church of St. Lawrence) " and anone the ache was gone ".[12] Our sympathy goes out to St. Peter of Milan, who, having to dispute with a heretic, found him " so sharp, aigre, and so full of words that St. Peter myght have of hym none audyence ". After going away and praying earnestly, he came back and found his opponent who had so obstinately refused fair play " in such case that he myght not speke ". The other heretics fled confused, " and the good crysten men thankyd god ".

St. Bernard, the mellifluous doctor, sometimes put his eloquence to unexpected use. " A grete multitude of flyes had taken a chirche that he had do make so that they dyde moche harme to alle them that cam thyder. And he sayd, I curse and excommyne them, and on the morne they were founden al dede."

But it is hopeless to attempt to convey an idea of the range and diversity of the various legends.[13] To one who cares for mediæval painting, carving, glass, or tapestry, and above all for the cathedrals, there is no work more indispensable.[14] F. S. Ellis, the modern

PLATE IX



THE ASSEMBLY OF SAINTS

Brit. Mus. C. 11. *d.* 8

[*Face p.* 120

editor of Caxton's *Golden Legend*, says: "All persons living in later times have been deeply indebted to the man who thus embodied for their benefit and instruction a picture of the mental attitude of the age in which he lived."

A short time before printing the *Golden Legend*, Caxton had published a work somewhat similar. This was the *Festial* of John Mirk,[15] intended to furnish sermons for priests of limited education and hampered by lack of books. It gave homilies for the principal feasts of the ecclesiastical year, very fully enlivened with stories drawn largely from the *Golden Legend* and the *Gesta Romanorum*. The subjects treated were mainly the same (the *Golden Legend*, of course, containing a great many more), but the content differed very widely both in matter and in manner.

Mirk's *Festial* is of far less importance than the *Golden Legend*, and yet it is not without points of decided interest. Intended to reach the simplest hearts and most ignorant minds, the sermons are well adapted to their purpose. They begin by explaining carefully the name and the significance of the feast. "Goode men and wymmen, ye knowe that this day is called in holy chirche Innocentes day, that is in englisshe chyldermas day." Then follows very fully and simply the reason for the name and minute directions for the manner of observing each occasion with suitable devotion. The spiritual benefits and the abundant blessings that are sure to follow such observances, both in this world and in the life to come, are never permitted to fall into the background. The tales are narrated in a naïve and fresh style, well calculated to hold the attention of minds prone to wander.[16]

About this time, also, appeared a small folio of sixteen leaves containing the "lyf—decollacion—and the translacion of saynte Wenefrede virgyn and martir ".[17] This saint was a Welsh maiden who lived probably in the seventh century. Inspired by the teachings of " an holy man named beunow ", she determined to devote her life to God. One Sunday, kept at home by illness, she was visited by the young prince Cradok, who insisted she should yield to his wooing. She ran toward the church, but he pursued and in his rage over defeat smote off her head with his sword.

From the spot sprinkled with her blood sprang a well " enduryng unto this day, which heleth al langours and sekenesses as well in men as in bestes ". The grief of her father and mother for this only child moved the holy Beuno to pray for her restoration to life. Placing the head upon the body, he bade the entire congregation kneel with him in supplication to God, and when they arose the maiden arose with them. Ever afterwards " a lytil redenes in maner of a threde " remained about her neck as evidence of the miracle.

As to the wicked prince, the holy man turned to him as he " stode & wyped his swerde on the grasse," and rebuked not only the crime of murder but the " sacrylege " by which he had " gretely trespaced & wratthed our lorde ". Immediately the young man " fylle doun to therthe & expyred & deyde ". His body turned black and was borne away by fiends.

The holy maid took the veil. As she parted from her spiritual father Beuno at the miraculous well—he was setting out for Ireland—she promised each year to place some token in the waters of the stream flowing from the spring, which, carried to the sea, might be directed to him by Heaven and assure him of her welfare.[18]

Perhaps the most interesting section of this volume is the account of how the monastery of Shrewsbury obtained the relics of St. Winifred in the time when

" harry the fyrste an hyhe and excellent prynce and frende of pees governed the Royamme of Englond ". A vivid picture is given of the skill and daring necessary to gain possession of saints' relics in a time when they were more precious than gold or jewels. The intrigue and adventures involved in the translation are naturally accompanied by miraculous events, which culminate in setting upon the altar safely the holy relics. And ever since in that place " have ben shewed Innumerable vertues there to the glorye and lawde of almyghty god ".

A book that may have been translated by Caxton, and which appears to have been printed by Wynkyn de Worde shortly after his master's death, is the *Life of St. Katherine of Sienna*, containing also an account of the revelations of St. Elizabeth of Hungary.

The life of St. Katherine, whose canonization in 1461 would have been a matter of contemporary interest to Caxton, is specially noteworthy for the tender and affectionate tone of the narrative and the comments on the various incidents. The account is written for the edification of young girls, and even the repellent details of the ascetism she practised are made to seem gentle and attractive. Readers learn how she " scourged her lytell tender body with a lytell scourge ", how she " lefte of all maner pleyes and dysportes and besely gafe her to prayer and medytacyons ", and especially how each day she took less food than before, " And that is not wonte to falle in chyldren that be wexynge."

Her mother's efforts to make her lead a normal life furnish delightful details. When household tasks were multiplied to draw her away from too much meditation, she made the drudgery part of her spiritual discipline by " a blessyd ymagynacyon ". Her father became " our lorde Jhesu Chryste oure Sauyour and hyr moder oure blessyd ladye Saynt Marye. And hyr brethren and other many of the housholde (she was the youngest of twenty-four children) betokeneth the holy appostles of our lorde and other dyscyples of hys ". Under these circumstances work was done " alle the more gladdely " than the practice of penance, —much to the wonder of her family.

Such a spirit could not long be restrained from the vocation of a religious life, and the story of her spiritual adventures and ecstatic visions is unfolded in a way to thrill any noble heart. The translator's tone of personal interest is conveyed by frequent passages such as : " Loo maydens, as nere as I myght I have translated worde for worde the wordes of the booke and prayer of this holy mayde, of the whyche gyfte ye besely take hede—not only as for the maner of lyvynge, but also for the doctryne of trouthe, the whiche is ryght merveylous I sayde, and namely of a woman."

In the Caxton memorial window of St. Margaret's, Westminster, the printer is shown as an intermediate figure between the Venerable Bede and Erasmus. Less than either as a scholar, he is their equal in devotion to his work ; and to him was granted in an equal degree what he doubtless would have termed " a fayre ende ". Just as Bede dictated the last words of the Gospel of John, then closed his eyes to awake in eternity, so Caxton " fynysshed at the last daye of his lyff " one of his longest works—the translation of the lives of the fathers of the desert.[19]

No book is more frequently quoted than this in mediæval literature. Popularly attributed to St. Jerome, it was a quarry to which writers and speakers freely turned for material. Although Jerome was greatly interested in these remarkable men and wrote the lives of several, the main part of the compilation seems to be the work of Palladius, Bishop of Helenopolis, who lived for a long time among the hermits of the Thebaid, and whose testimony as to their lives of asceticism is from personal knowledge.[20]

The dispute as to who was the first hermit is considered by Jerome in his life of Paul. He regards the controversy as due to " vayn curyosyte ", and its settlement as unimportant. " It is moche better and more valyable . . . to folowe the gode maners & vertues of the holy faders than to tarye of a thyng of soo lytell valewe."

The meeting between Anthony and Paul abounds in details fruitful of suggestions for cultivating Christian virtues. As they break bread together there is a fine contest in courtesy, each being too humble to precede the other.

St. Anthony's advice to his disciples contains among other things the principle upon which was based the great popularity of saints' lives. " He sayde to theym they sholde ofte rede the lyves of the good auncyent or aeged faders, to thende that by theyr vertues they myght be encyted and styred to lyve well." The beauty and healthfulness of an ascetic life are shown by the fact that St. Anthony lived in the desert for a hundred years, " and never had he bayned ne wasshed " nor had he eaten " ony delycate metes ", and yet " his flesshe & skynne was as precyous & fayr and more clene thanne ony myght be seen ".

Scorn of bodily indulgence is the outstanding characteristic of all these lives. Since heat and drouth are peculiar hardships among these desert dwellers, it is a characteristic virtue emphasized in many of the lives not to eat fruit. However, it is not the deprivation that is dwelt upon, but the joy to which denial is a key. " It is a synguler delectacion and playsaunce to be and enhabyte in a body lene by penaunce."

In spite of many unpleasant details, the characters presented are by no means unattractive. St. Abraham was so favoured of God that " alle the wordes that he spake were merveylously agreeable . . . alle they that herde hym speke or loked on hym, always more and more they desyred to see hym ". And there is the tale of St. Pelagia, the original of the Thaïs theme that has inspired modern music and literature, and St. John the Almoner, who appears in such attractive form later in the *Golden Legend.* It is in the life of St. John that we get the first version of the story of Peter the Changer, so popular in the Middle Ages. Here also is an epigram too effective to pass without notice : " Never to have noyse with another it is an angel's lyfe ; sometyme to stryve the one with the other, it is mannes lyf ; evermore to have noyse & hate, it is a devyl's lyfe."

It is evident that in Caxton's plans the lives of the saints were held as second to no other subject in importance. Either under his own supervision or in his types soon after his death by Wynkyn de Worde—who seems to have carried out designs left unfinished by his master's death—he put forth three editions of the *Golden Legend*, two of Mirk's *Festial*, and one each of the *Vitæ Patrum*, *Saint Winifred*, and *Saint Katherine of Sienna.* Two of these, the *Golden Legend* and the *Vitæ Patrum*, were very long, and two others, the *Festial* and *St. Katherine*, were large books.

Against this point is levelled one of the most frequent criticisms of Caxton's work as a printer. Gibbon regards his output as of little value, because in order " to comply with the vicious taste of his readers " he did not print classics, but " amused the popular credulity with romances of fabulous knights and legends of more fabulous saints ". When we remember, however, Gibbon's reference to Gothic cathedrals, " I darted a contemptuous look on the stately monuments of superstition ",[21] we are able to realize the extent of his limitations as a critic of any expression of the mediæval spirit.

The change that has taken place since Gibbon's time in the significance of the term Gothic is typical of the change in English criticism. Even the attitude toward saints' legends, which has been most stubborn in yielding, now makes it possible for all but the most bigoted English reader to respond to the thrill of spiritual adventure, to be elevated by the examples of moral heroism, take joy in the poetic symbolism, and catch the afterglow of the burning ecstasies of the great mystics recorded in these tales of "holy faders" and saints.

At the close of the introduction to his series, *Messages of the Saints*,[22] Mr. A. W. Pollard has finely interpreted this modern English attitude: "All the lives of the saints are no more than aspects caught from the one supreme life of love, and in guiding us back to that, each tells the whole tale, and enriches it in the telling by its own witness to the truth."

NOTES

1. An illustration of the zeal displayed in this cause is the mutilation of manuscripts by tearing out or defacing certain passages such as the life of Thomas-à-Becket, and the destruction of statues, tombs, and priceless glass in the churches.

2. Note the publication of works such as Baring-Gould's *Lives of the Saints* (13 vols.) and the popularity of the works of Mrs. Jameson and Mrs. Arthur Bell on the saints in art.

3. See Appendix, p. 255 ff.

4. Blades: *Biog.*, pp. 280–5. Gerould: *Saints Lives.* Pierce Butler: *Legenda Aurea—Légende Dorée—Golden Legend*, Baltimore, 1899.

5. His appreciation is shown not only in the words of his prologue but by the introduction of a large woodcut bearing the Arundel device and motto. The illustrations of this work are particularly ambitious. The frontispiece—a gathering of the saints—is Caxton's largest illustration. There are fifty-two other cuts.

6. Butler: *op. cit.*, pp. 80–1. One of the most frequent criticisms of Caxton's choice of books is that he did not print the Bible. Such critics overlook the fact that it would not have been possible in

view of the State's attitude toward Lollardry (with which Caxton entirely sympathized) to print the Bible in England in his time, except in this disguised way.

7. See Appendix for some of the more important of these passages.

8. The book is divided into five sections, each headed by a special treatise in the nature of a sermon on the special feast day which it applies to: thus, Section I begins with De Adventu, and includes chapters i.–v.; then Section II extends from Christmas to Sexuagesima, chapters vi.–xxx.; Section III, from Septuagesima to Easter, chapters xxi.–liii.; Section IV, Easter to the octave of Pentecost, chapters liv.–lxxvi.; and Section V, Pentecost to Advent, chapters lxxvii.–clxxx. And in the Prologue the author calls attention very quaintly to these five sections, and to the scriptures to be read in connection with them. " There is no doubt ", says Aspland (*Golden Legend*, *Holbein Soc.*, 1878, p. 35), " that it [the *Legenda*] was read in churches, and studied as a religious book " (quoted from Butler, *op. cit.*, p. 9).

9. For the full passage, see Appendix, p. 259.

10. The same man from whose work Caxton translated the Chess Book.

11. The most thorough discussion of these etymologies—which are disappointingly omitted in some translations—may be found in Butler, *op. cit.*, pp. 87–99.

12. Life of St. Lawrence.

13. ten Brink has expressed this very forcibly in vol. i, p. 269 of his *History of Early English Literature*, London, 1883.

> " On the one hand, the distant Orient, on the other, Ireland, the era of the founding of the church, or still earlier epochs, and the thirteenth century. . . . Equal diversity is evident when we compare the character and import of the single legends. Now we have the most delicate poesy, the most fervent depth of feeling; now grotesque, even repulsive, scenes, and fantastic miracles. These elements are sometimes united, and we are reminded of the necessity of laying aside our modern aesthetic standard, if we wish to do justice to the fancy of earlier days."

14. For fuller development of this point, cf. Henry Adams: *Mont St. Michel and Chartres*, and Mâle: *L'Art Religieux du Moyen Age*.

15. Blades: *Biog.*, p. 263. Duff: *William Caxton*, p. 56. Mirk was canon of the Abbey of St. Mary at Lilleshall in Shropshire. He made his compilation early in the fifteenth century. The second edition, printed by Wynkyn de Worde shortly after Caxton's death, differs considerably from the first. It follows (Duff: *op. cit.*) the version printed at Oxford (1486) by Rood and Hunte.

16. A modern edition of Mirk's *Festial* was published in 1905 by the Early English Text Society, Extra Series, No. XCVI. This

is not a reprint of Caxton, but is edited from a Bodleian MS. It contains a few more lives of saints (Barnabe, Weneffrede, Alkemund) than Caxton's edition.

17. Blades: *Biog.*, pp. 301–4. The source of Caxton's life is supposed to be the Latin account of Robert of Shrewsbury, which was based on earlier MSS. and included details which tradition had added. Blades states that the *Golden Legend* and Mirk's *Festial* both contain short accounts of her life. This is true, except that neither of the two Caxton editions of the *Festial* includes the section for Winifred's day.

18. "The fame of wonderful cures effected by these waters spread all over England, and greatly enhanced the shrine of St. Winifred, until Holywell became the most favoured goal of pilgrims to the north" (Blades).

19. This was printed by Wynkyn de Worde with the following colophon:

> "Thus endeth the moost vertuouse hystorye of the devoute / & right renouned lyves of holy faders lyvynge in deserte worthy of remembrance to all well dysposed persones / whiche hath be translated out of frensshe into Englysshe by Wyllyam Caxton of Westmynstre late deed / and fnysshed it at the laste daye of his lyff. Emprynted in the sayd Towne of Westmynstre by my Wynkyn de Worde the yere of our lord MCCCCLXXXXV and thretenth yere of our soverayne lorde kynge Henry the seventh."

20. Paulin Paris, in his *MSS. Français de la Bibl. du Roi* (vol. iv, No. 7023), states that the Greek text from which the French *Vie des Pères du Désert* was translated was always attributed in the Middle Ages to St. Jerome, who, however, wrote only the most illustrious of them. The true author seems to be Palladius, Bishop of Helenopolis, who lived long among the pious hermits of the Thebaid, and whose testimony is therefore as credible as that of St. Jerome. French translations of this precious monument go back to the cradle of vernacular literature. There are several of the twelfth century.

In contrast to the number of translations in French thus cited is the fact that this translation of Caxton's, printed by his successor, is the only one that I have been able to discover in English. Recently Sir E. A. Wallis Budge has issued a translation from the Syriac, with notes and introduction, of a work that appears to be very similar.

21. Quoted in Adams: *The Education of Henry Adams*, p. 386.

22. *Messages of the Saints* (3 vols.), edited by A. W. Pollard, 3 vols., 1918–1919.

CHAPTER IX

SCIENCE AND LEARNING

Whan I beholde the thyngys naturall
Gadryd by grace sent by the holy ghost
Breiffly compyled in bokes specyall,
As Bartholomewe showeth & eke declareth most,
Then I rejoyce, remembrynge every coste;
How some countree hath grete commodite,
Some rote, some frute, some stoon of hygh degre.

NOT without significance is the fact that Caxton learned the art of printing by working on an edition of *Bartholomæus de Proprietatibus Rerum.*[1] Wynkyn de Worde, who seems to have been heir to his ideas and policies as well as to his business equipment, wrote in his prologue to the first edition of this work:

And also of your charyte call to remembraunce
The soule of William Caxton first prynter of this boke
In laten tonge at Coleyn hymself to avaunce
That every well disposyd man may theron loke.

Although it was probably chance that determined the work to which Caxton gave the zeal of his apprenticeship, the fact remains that while his first translation was a romance, and his *magnum opus* a collection of saints' lives, yet his very earliest production was a survey in popular form of the scientific ideas of his age.[2]

It was not this work, however, that he chose to put out from his own press as an encyclopædia of knowledge in the English language, though the fact that Wynkyn de Worde issued it so soon after his death suggests that he included it in his plans. The work he did select [3] was his own translation of the French *Ymage du Monde.* To quote O. H. Prior, editor of a recent reprint: " Caxton's choice was in every way a happy one. He could have selected any one of many Latin works . . . which contained the sum of the knowledge of the times. But these were too learned or too cumbersome . . ." or " treating of one or two subjects only ", while this " fulfilled the necessary conditions of a popular encyclopædia." Its success is shown by the fact that Caxton issued two editions. It is also noteworthy as the first English book illustrated with woodcuts.[4]

Inevitably the work begins with the " power & puissance of God," who created the world because of " his debonairte ", and made man " to his semblaunce ", and gave him free will (a moche fool if he chooses evil). Explanation follows of " wherfore & how the VII artes liberall were founde ", what they include, and their importance to man.

Before the time of divine revelation " men coude not knowe ne fynde no resons of god but only by his werkis ". On this account the " good auncyent wysemen " withdrew themselves from the mass who " ben much more curyous of their grete and fatte paunches for to fylle " than to search out the mysteries of creation. These philosophers, who " apetyted not these grete mangeries " and " had noo cure to amasse none other goodes, but only to lerne the pure science ", lived in solitude " fro the peple like as religious peple ", except for rare occasions when they came " to gydre for to solace them and sporte ". At such times " eche rendred his reson of that he had founde and lerned ", and the results of their researches " they sette in compilacyons ". After many centuries " of labours and contynuel studyes " the seven liberal arts were evolved, and all who had contributed to this growth " helde ther labour wel employed & the payne they had put therto ".

These arts make up the mediæval system of the trivium (grammar, logic, rhetoric) and the quadrivium (arithmetic, geometry, music, and astronomy). The first, " gramaire ", is " the fondement and the beginnynge of clergye ". Without it one cannot master any language, and since " God made the world by worde ", it is only through language that one can get at the meaning of existence.

Logic, or dialectic, enables us to distinguish true from false, good from evil. It is tremendously important, for following one leads to heaven, the other to hell, " whiche is horryble, stynkyng, and redoutable ". Rhetoric adds to the skill of discrimination the art of system and arrangement. It is " in substaunce rightwisnis, rayson, and ordynaunce of wordes ". From it proceed law and organization. Arithmetic is the centre of all the sciences, for " no thyng is without nombre "; geometry measures all things, and music (" whiche fourmeth hym of arsmetrique ") harmonizes all things; " by her the VII sciences were sette in concorde that they yet endure ".

Astronomy is " of all clergye the ende ". If one knows and understands it well, " he can sette reson in alle thinges ". All knowledge may be said to be included in it, for if one " myght have the parfayt scyence therof he myght wel knowe how the world was compassed and plente of other parcyal scyences ".

As a matter of fact, no one of the seven can be mastered apart from the others, since they " ben in suche wise entrelaced that . . . the first may not be perfightly conned withoute the laste ne the laste wythout the firste . . . for that one is so comune to that other that it behoveth to knowe of alle; but nowe men seche to lerne nomore but the arte for to gete y^e^ moneye ".

Medicine, although very highly spoken of, is not ranked as an art or science, but as " a mestier or a crafte ", because it deals with the body of man, and " ther is nothyng liberal ne free that groweth of therthe ". Lawyers are referred to with even less respect. Too often those who scarcely know the first book of grammar put their " artes in their males and goo lerne anon the lawes or decretals and become advocates or juristes fore to amasse & gadre alway money ; wherein the devyl conforteth hem. And yet they doo not so moche for to lerne as they doo for to fylle their purses ".

A large portion of the book is devoted to geography and the characteristic features of different parts of the world. Here Caxton makes several interesting departures from the original. One is the entire omission of the passage referring to " tailed men " in England.[5] When Paris is referred to as a centre of learning, he always adds Cambridge and Oxford.[6] He includes Bath among the great health resorts of Europe, and in the passage on Africa, although he translates the statements of his text, he objects to including Greece, Tuscany, Lombardy, Spain, and other European places in that continent.

His most striking interpolation is in the description of St. Patrick's Purgatory in Ireland. After giving the story of Tundale's fearful experiences, he adds, on the authority of men who have visited the place, that the time of such miracles has passed. Two men in particular influenced his opinion: one, " an hye chanon of waterford ", and the other " a worshipfull knyght of bruggis named Sir John de banste ", who " had ben therin in lyke wyse and see none other thyng " but the natural features of the cave. These reports evidently influenced Caxton's treatment of St. Patrick's Purgatory in other books as well, notably in the *Golden Legend.*

In many ways the *Mirrour of the World* is surprisingly modern. The illustrations used to show that the earth is round, how eclipses occur, why the stars are seen only by night, and what causes the various phases of the moon, are quaint, but by no means absurd. No one can finish this one of Caxton's books, remembering that it was published several years before the famous voyage of Columbus, without increased respect for the general knowledge of men in the fifteenth century, and their basic good sense in interpreting such knowledge as they had.

High up in the canopy work of the Caxton memorial window in St. Margaret's, Westminster, are the figures of two little boys, one laughing merrily over a story book, and the other crying over his Latin grammar. Both these conceptions are based on strict reality, for to Caxton's press is due not only the first printed romance, but the first printed *Donatus*, the famous *Ars Grammatica* that all through the Middle Ages formed the introduction to the seven liberal arts.[8]

A rhetoric, also, was early issued from Caxton's press.[9] This is a large volume in Latin with the attractive title of *Margarita Eloquentiæ.* All the elements necessary for producing effective presentation of ideas and methods that help to persuade a reader or listener to receive truth and religion are presented in great detail. The various parts of an address are explained, and advice is given as to voice, pronunciation, the mastery of words, and the use of figures and illustrations. Great use is made of quotation from Cicero, Isidore, and others.

To Caxton, also, is due the first hand-book of phrases for the use of travellers in a foreign country. This is a parallel column, French-English collection

PLATE X

THE MIRROUR OF THE WORLD

[*Face p.* 134

of conversational phrases and dialogues, adapted from a French-Flemish compilation made in Bruges.[10] To make it readily useful, this is furnished with an index " for to fynde all by ordre ".

It begins with an invocation to the Trinity, then states that the book is so ordained that men may " resonably understande Frenssh and englissh ". Since this book contains " moo wordes and reasons " than " many othir bookes ", whoever commits it to memory " may well entreprise or take on honde marchandises fro one land to another ". Readers are exhorted—

> Lerne this book deligently ;
> Grete prouffyt lieth therin truly.

Phrases for greeting, farewell, and various forms of courtesy in conversation follow. Then the house and its furnishings are provided with a suitable vocabulary, clothing, food, and family relationships, all interspersed with directions for use of utensils and for proper conduct and attitude toward others. Especially is it emphasized that children should be sent " to the schole

> To lerne rede and to write,
> That they resemble not bestis."

In order to be well equipped for bargaining in the market, a typical conversation is recorded with all the phrases necessary to beat down to a reasonable figure the grasping " Dame " who asks " Four shelynges for the elle " for ordinary cloth. Discussion accompanies measuring the cloth for " a pair of gounes," and the bill is paid in a manner that involves a rich vocabulary of coins.

Lists of the kinds of cloth found in various towns, and the great fairs with the articles offered in them for sale, are accompanied by information in regard to weights and measures. Titles of nobility are given, together with the dignitaries of the Church, monks and nuns of different orders, and the learned professions.

The various crafts and trades are presented in a series of dialogues in which proper names—arranged alphabetically—are used to represent the different activities of the social order. "Ancelme, sette the table and the trestles; wasshe the glasses. . . . Bryce, go to the oven for the pasteyes; draw out the sholdre . . . it is ynough rosted." And sometimes the passage is enlivened by controversy. "Agnes our maid can well name all the grete festes and the termes of the yere. 'Damyselle name them.' 'I shall not, so god helpe me!'"

Of course this gives opportunity to introduce another proper name, and Agace does with fluency what the unexpectedly recalcitrant Agnes has refused. We learn that "David the bridelmaker is a good werkman", that "Franceys the drapier is a riche man", and that "George the booke sellar hath moo bookes than all they of the toune. He byeth them all suche as they ben, be they stolen or enprinted or othirwyse pourchaced." A list follows of the classes of books he has and the articles needed for the making of books.

And so to the end, a surprising number of details gives quaint pictures of the familiar, social intercourse and business life of the fifteenth century. Inns and the proper procedure for travellers receive due attention, and the little manual draws to a pious close with:

The grace of the holy ghoost
Wylle enlyghte the hertes
Of them that shall lerne it,
And us gyve perseveraunce
In good werkes,
And after lyf transitorie
The everlastynge ioye and glorie.

The earliest medical book printed in the English language is Caxton's *Governayle of Helthe.*[11] This, like most of the works from Caxton's press, is not a technical treatise, but is cast into popular form for lay use. It is really a handbook of personal hygiene. It gives practical, every-day rules for the preservation of health, some of them antiquated and fanciful, but most of them as valuable to-day as when they were written, since they are based on good sense and actual experience.

" Wyth crystis helpe ", the author undertakes to explain what course is necessary to retain health in the owner's possession or to regain it after it is lost. " Holsome governaunce " alone will enable a man to " lyve tylle he be olde " and " com to his naturell ende ".

One must first avoid excesses either of body or of mind. He must observe carefully three things: to keep a cheerful mind, to be occupied with a reasonable amount of work, and to be moderate in food and drink. Special directions are given under each of these heads.

In order that the advice may be very definite, concrete suggestions are proposed, beginning with " what is fyrst on morow to be done ". One should rise and dress himself " wyth good clothes & swete yf he have them "; then he should walk a little " evenli to stretche oute his lymmes ". Combing the hair apparently has other uses than improving the appearance, " forwhi kembying draweth out the vapours that comyn from the stomake to the hed in tyme of slepe ". After the needs of the body have been duly cared for " loke he praye and preyse his lorde after the doctryne of his lawe ". Then he may study, read, talk, or " use hym selfe mesurable travayl ", just as he may wish. It is important that he should " in mesure be mery & flee utterly wrath & sorow (modified by the recognition of human limitations) in as moche as he may ".

A treatise on exercise follows. This stresses the value of the voluntary element as opposed to what is required by a man's profession or business. For good results two things are necessary : " that he be not to full ne to emty " ; if too full there might be " gret drede of the lyver or some fever or sodeyne deth " ; if too empty, " then sholde his body be feble oute of mesure ". Fulgens and Galen are quoted on the great value of exercise.

Rest, too, is needful, but not too much. " For whi yf rest be to moche it gendreth, norysheth and multyplyeth evyll humors and encreaseth moche corupcyon. For why when water resteth to moche it stynketh, soo iron & eche metall rustyth when it restyth."

A section on the " Spyces of Exercyse " advises walking for the common classes, riding for the rich, and for " grete prelates " a system of indoor exercises given in much detail.[12] These sedate forms are evidently recommended for the mature and elder members of society, because the author suggests that " for yonge men that ben lusty, it is good to renne, to wrastle, to lepe, to caste the stone ", and to take part in " other playes ".

Health also depends on a discreet choice of food and drink. The time for eating should be determined by a natural, healthy appetite ; otherwise one finds " the kyndely hete of his stomake colde " ; but if he is hungry, " he shal fynde the kyndely hete of the stomake gyve up a smell & savoure like encense ". Specific directions are given as to the kind of food and drink suited to each season and each " complexion "—whether sanguine, choleric, melancholy, or phlegmatic. One is shown how a " dystempered person " may be gradually brought " to tempre " by a correct diet.[13] Many sensible rules govern the relation of diet and exercise. Of all these, temperance is the keynote, and the worst abuse is " to multyple metes and so to sytte long therat ".

Drink also should be carefully regulated. Special care should be taken to drink little while eating. " Forthy men should drynk a lityll so that the mete be well medeled & tempered togyder ", but " the lesse ye drynk at mete the better it is ". The kind of drink should be carefully chosen to preserve the correct temper in complexion.

Good judgment must be used in regard to sleep. Very amusing advice, with plausible reasons for it, is offered on the position to be taken in sleep.[14] As to amount, it should be watched and regulated. " Slepe is full helpy to olde men, for it maketh them moyst ", but in general " to longe slepe or to shorte febleth a mannys body and breketh it."

The *Medecina Stomachi*, a short treatise in verse which follows the *Governayle*, is sometimes included in the poems of Lydgate, and in one manuscript (*Harl.*, 116) is expressly called his. The advice is practically the same as that given in the prose work that precedes it, and of which it forms, practically, a poetic summary.

It is an arbitrary classification to set aside a handful of books like these under the head of science and learning, for to the fifteenth century religion and philosophy were science, and all learning existed to throw more light on religion. But although the essential unity of life was still stressed as of the greatest importance, it is profitable to note the evidences of differentiation and analysis. The age of Caxton was not a yawning chasm, but a normal stage on the road that led from Chaucer and Wyclif to Shakespeare and Bacon.

NOTES

1. Blades's rejection of Wynkyn de Worde's statement in his prologue to the first English edition of *Bartholomæus* (see *Biog.*, pp. 64 and 368) was practically removed by E. Gordon Duff in his *William Caxton* (pp. p22–23). It is now definitely set aside by the discovery of Lieut.-Col. J. G. Birch (cf. *The Library*, vol. iv, pp. 50 ff.) in the register of aliens at Cologne of four entries of permission given to William Caxton to reside in the city for successive periods, from July 1471 to the close of 1492. Taken with Wynkyn de Worde's verse, this establishes the identification of the edition of *Bartholomæus* previously under dispute.

2. For a discriminating treatment of this work and its importance in understanding Chaucer and Shakespeare, see the delightful edition in the King's Classics Series by Robert Steele, entitled *Mediæval Lore*.

3. At the request of his friend and fellow mercer, Hugh Bryce (see Prologue, Appendix, p. 238 ff.), who wished to present it to Lord Hastings. For discussion of this work and its sources cf. Blades: *Biog.*, pp. 226–9, 349; E.E.T.S. Extra Series, No. CX, Int ; Paulin Paris : *MSS. Fr. de la Bibl. du Roi*, vol. v, p. 31.

4. Blades gives an edition of *Cato* priority, but later authorities place the *Mirrour* first. These cuts are evidently designed from the MSS. illuminations.

5. A chapter on this legend may be found in Baring-Gould : *Curious Myths of the Middle Ages*; see also E.E.T.S., *Mirrour*, p. 19. It seems to have originated in a story of men who mockingly tied fish-tails to the garments of St. Augustine of Canterbury and were cursed (and their descendants also) by ever after having tails.

6. He does this even when no special credit accrues, as in the following :

> "In parys Oxenford and Cambrige is ther suche maner of clerkes that ben acustomed to wille have the Renomme and fame to be called maistres for to be the more preysed and honoured ; and have lever to conne lytil and to have the name of maistre than they shold be good clerkes without havyng the degree and name of maistre. But they be called maistres wrongfully ffor vanyte maistryeth them in suche wise that they can but lytil trouthe, bicause that they have so soone the name of maistre they leve the clergye and take them to the wynnyng, lyke as marchants doo and brokers. And in this wise ben many in the world that have the name of maistre that know right lytil of good and reson."

7. The passage interpolated may be found, Appendix, p. 241.

8. This work was unknown to Blades. In fact, the window design preceded the knowledge that Caxton published such a book, for Mr. Proctor's discovery was made in 1893 and communicated to the Press, February 28, 1893. E. G. Duff (*William Caxton*, p. 68) says:

> " A few years ago Mr. Robert Proctor working in the library of New College, Oxford, found in the binding of a book two small slips of vellum with some printing upon them in Caxton's type No. 5. These turned out to be portions of a leaf of a hitherto unknown Caxton, an edition of the *Donatus melior*, revised by Mancinellus, printed in folio. They are also the earliest specimens of Caxton's use of vellum."

9. Blades: *Biog.*, pp. 218–21.

10. Blades: *Biog.*, p. 262, and E.E.T.S. Extra Series, No. LXXIX, ed. Henry Bradley.

11. Blades: *Biog.*, pp. 340–1.

12. One is tempted to entitle this " A Mediæval Daily Dozen for Great Prelates." The passage is as follows:

> " For whi in chambre shall be a grete corde knytted in the ende & hanged up, and take that corde wyth bothe handes and stond upryght soo that thou touche not the erthe, and stonde a good while; thenne run as moche as thou mayst heder and theder wyth that corde, and otherwhyle skyppe. And yf this please the not, have a stone of XXX l. weyghte or theraboute, and yf thou wolt have helthe therin, ofte bere that ston fro that on side of that house to that other side, or a longe whyle holde up that ston or thou let it doun, or bere it aboute thy necke, or bytwene thy handes, and so of other maners tyl thou feynt. Or thus holde a staffe in thy hand and lete another take it yf he maye wyth even draughte. Or thus close a peny in thyn hand & lete another take it yf he may. Or thus holde thy breth as longe as thou maist, and thenne puffe it oute as harde as thou maist do. And this maner of exercyse is full profytable to put oute noyous superfluytees."

13. Although an understanding of calories makes diet-regulation more scientific, the practice of " girth control " is by no means modern.

14. " Slepe fyrst on thy ryght syde . . . for thy dygestion shall be better, for then lieth thy lyver under the stomak as fyre under a cawdren. And after thi fyrst slepe turne on thy lifte syde that thy ryght side may be rested . . . and whan thou hast layen theron a good while and slept, turn ayen on thi ryght side and then slepe all nyght forth. And loke that thou lye not to streight ne to croked. And in no wyse lie not upryght, for then woll the superfluytees abyde wythin the and turne to wycked and grevous evylles contrarye to helthe. Also to lie grovelyng on the wombe is goode, so that thy breth be not greved therwyth."

CHAPTER X

ENGLISH HISTORY, POLITICS, AND LAW

And cause full often ryght good governaunce,
Withouten whyche synne wold hymself avaunce.

WE are told that Henry V—that greatest of English Kings as presented by the greatest of English dramatists—selected for his own share of the spoils of Caen a book of histories.[1] In this choice, as in other respects, Shakespeare's Prince Hal was a true representative of his age. The development of community life and social consciousness shown in the astonishing growth of towns and cities in the fifteenth century[2] had the effect of extending an interest in history and public affairs beyond the circle of nobles and learned clerks into an ever-widening public of middle-class and mercantile readers. That Caxton was aware of this interest is evident from the fact that he issued two editions of the *Chronicles of England*, a *Description of Britain*, and Trevisa's translation of Higden's *Polychronicon* (this last with a continuation of his own bringing events down to 1460), all within a period of two years.[3]

The Chronicles of England, the first English history ever printed, is popularly known as Caxton's *Chronicle*. It is really an English version of the Brut continued down to the year 1461.[4] Mr. Kingsford, in his study of the English historical literature of this period, has shown the real importance both to history and to literature of this work so generally passed by as of no value. He has pointed out its close relation to the London chronicles, and its evident borrowings from ballads, popular poems, news-letters, and reports of eye-witnesses.

As to its literary importance, he notes that in it "a narrative written in English speech for popular use for the first time takes rank as a leading contemporary authority". Between its first appearance in print in 1480 and 1528 thirteen editions were issued. "The immaturity of its style," he maintains, "is of small moment compared with the fact of its existence." Here was a work in the vernacular written by laymen, intended for a lay public, and entirely unconnected with monastery or university. Most significant of all, "in the Brut are found the germs of that opinion which in the hands of Elizabethan historians and dramatists made Henry V the national hero and the struggle of Lancaster and York the theme of a national cycle of tragedies".[5]

Without doubt, the vogue of popular history in English had been greatly quickened by Trevisa's translation of Higden's *Polychronicon.*[6] In his preface to this work Caxton pays warm tribute to the value of history, declaring that "the pryncipal laude and cause of delectable and amyable thynges in whiche mannes felycyte stondeth and resteth ought and maye wel be attributed to hystoryes".[7] History is the "moder of alle philosophye, moevynge our maners to vertu". Since it "embraceth al utylyte & prouffite", Caxton devoted to it special time and expense. To the very extensive labour of *Trevisa* (a much larger work than the *Chronicles*) he added another book, bringing events down to the year 1460. He also re-wrote the whole in order to make it more attractive to his readers; to quote his own words, he "somewhat chaunged the rude and old englyssh, that is to wete, certayn wordes which in these dayes be neither usyd ne understanden ".[8]

That he did more than this may be seen by examining the famous passage in which Trevisa comments on the language of his time. Caxton both abbreviates and expands. He omits the name of Richard Peneriche, who carried on John Cornwaile's innovation of teaching boys in English instead of French, and adds to Trevisa's reference to the " uplondyssh man's " efforts to ape the speech of his betters : " for it is sayd by a comyn proverbe Jack wold be a gentilman if he coude speke frensshe ".

Caxton's edition includes—what has been omitted by the modern editor in the Rolls Series—the preface to Trevisa's translation. This is an interesting discussion, in the form of dialogue between the lord and his clerk, of the need of translation into the vernacular.

The unfortunate division of tongues following the tragedy of the Tower of Babel has been a great handicap, since men of different nations " understondeth others speche no more than gaglinge of gees. For jangle that one never so fast that other is never the wyser though he shrewe hym instede of good morow ". Although Latin is in a sense a universal language, yet the lord wishes to have the work of " Ranulphus monke of Chestre " translated into English so that " moo men shold hem understande ".

The clerk objects that his lord understands Latin and does not need an English version.

The lord admits that he speaks and reads Latin, but that much in these books " I cannot understonde, nether thou withoute studyeng, avisement, and lokyng of other bookes ". Moreover, there are men, who know no Latin, that should have the information contained in these books.

The clerk thinks such men should learn Latin.

The lord doesn't think so, and gives reasons why. Some are too busy, some too old, some lack wit, some lack means or friends to send them to school, and some are prevented by " other defautes and lettes ".

The clerk holds that such do not need to know the chronicles.

The lord's reply recalls the spirit of Lear's famous outburst in regard to his " need " of servants. In the " straytely to speke " sense of need, no man needs to know " the cronykes ", but in a more liberal interpretation " alle that is prouffytable nedeth ", and in this sense all men do need this knowledge.

The clerk urges that these men may ask and be given information by those who can read Latin.

The lord scouts this suggestion, since an ignorant man does not know what to ask for. Even supposing he did, the man asked might not have books or the time to consult them.

The clerk's last argument is that the Latin is so " good and fayr " that he does not like to try turning it into English. Upon this plea the lord lets loose his utmost scorn. He thinks it can be made " only in myrthe and in game ". Even a " bleer-eyed man . . . myght see the solucion "; if blind " he myght grope the solucion ". The clerk's argument is " worthy to be powdred, leyed a water and ysoused ". Did not Jerome and the early Fathers translate holy writ ? What about the translations of " kynge Alurede that founded the unyversyte of Oxenford ", the English poems of Cædmon, and Bede's Gospel of John ?

At last the clerk yields and meekly asks whether the translation shall be in rhyme or in prose. Without hesitation the lord says prose, " For communly prose is moore cleere than ryme, more easy and more playne to know and understande ".

Following this dialogue is printed the epistle of Trevisa to Lord Berkeley, in which, after a highly alliterative passage of introduction, he states that in order to carry out the will of his lord and make a translation " cleere and playne,

" In somme place I shall sette word for worde and actyf for actyf and passyf for passif arowe right as it stondeth withoute chaungynge of the ordre of wordes. But in somme place I must chaunge the ordre of wordes and sette actyf for passyf and ayenward. And in somme place I must sette a reson for a worde and telle what it meaneth. But for al suche chaungyng the menyng shall stande and not be chaunged."

This passage might almost be taken as descriptive of Caxton's own manner of translating—a manner very similar to that of the first great writer of English prose, King Alfred.

There is also a third preface, and in this harking back through the prologue of embellisher and translator to the compiler (who gleans from a long line of unknown collectors) one gets an indelible impression of continuity of idea expressed through varying personalities and periods. This, the prohemium of Higden, is a really eloquent presentation of the great value of history as the preserver of arts and science (knowledge), noble deeds, and beautiful thoughts.

As transmuted by the phrasing of Caxton, he tells us that although his " wytte is full lytel to unwynde the wrappynges of so wonderful werkes ", he will humbly try to glean what is left by the great men preceding him. He will " as a dwerf sitting on a geant's neck " do his bit so that " yonglynges nowe be brought to loore " and that " gretter men " may use his work as a short cut in their more important undertakings.

Of the original seven books, the first is a description of Britain, which Caxton regarded as of so much importance that he issued it again as an independent work.[9] His prologue to this separate edition urges its value in extending a knowledge of the land formerly called " Albyon ", whose " noblenesse and worthynesse " are not known as they should be.

Later books follow the traditional seven ages of the world, beginning with an elaborate exposition of man as microcosm and tracing in great detail the elements of the universal world included in his nature.

In Book IV, with the tale of Helena's discovery of the true cross and the triumph of Christianity under her son Constantine, the work assumes the fullness and sweep of a great current carrying along in its resistless flow fact and fiction, truth and legend. More and more attention is centred on England and English affairs, until in the eighth book, added by Caxton, we find practically the same matter that he had previously published in bringing down to his own period the *Chronicles of England*.

Many quaint tales are embedded in this catholic stream. Saint Frideswide, pursued by King Algarus, whose wooing she had repulsed, sought shelter within the walls of Oxford. As she entered, the gates closed of themselves against the would-be ravisher and he was struck blind. " Syth that tyme after, kynges of Englond drede for to come with ynne that Cyte, for drede of myshappes that myght hem byfalle."

Famous romances are referred to as historical documents. A battle is memorable because in it died Amicus and Amelius, " crystes knyghtes and his herty frendes. Of hem ben red wonderfull dedes ". The Christian invasion of Spain by Charlemagne and the dolorous fate of his gallant rearguard is noted: " there olyuer chyef sewer of the kynges lord & rowland Erle of the palays were slayne and many other peres of Fraunce ".

Lively anecdotes of Charlemagne's daily life are given. " He sate ones at meete, and his mayster alcuinus sat to fore him. Thenne he axyd his mayster how grete difference . . . was bytwene a scot and a sot ; but the brede of a mete borde, sayd his mayster."

At the death of Charlemagne Archbishop Turpin had a vision of a fearful procession of black demons wending toward " Akon . . . for to take Charles soule " ; but they soon returned. " And Turpyn axyd what they had do." " We have, quod the fende, weyed Charles sowle, but thylke James of Spayne leyde soo many stones and teres in the weight and balaunce that Charles good dedes had the maystrye." With disgust the fiend admitted the great number of churches the Emperor had built to St. James of Compostella.

Tales of Æthelwulf and Judith, Alfred and Rollo the Dane, Alfred's son Edward, his daughter, the warlike " Lady of the Mercians ", his favourite grandson Athelstan, Dunstan, " kingmaker of the Tenth Century ", and Ethelred the Unready, follow each other in picturesque pageantry. But it is with Edward the Confessor that the monastic pen becomes inspired. From this point on, however, the tone is more restrained.

Caxton's continuation—spoken of by Blades as his longest and most important original work—is really little else than his continuation of the *Chronicles of England*, previously published. Although it contains many points of interest, it is no more original than the *Golden Legend* or the *Mirrour of the World*. In fact, both these contain passages drawn from personal experience and observation that make them much more original than this *Liber ultimus*. However, there is a certain personal interest in such passages as that of the " cursid heresye of Iohan Wyclyf " ; of the birth, christening, and crowning in Paris of Henry VI (with its abrupt interpolation of "Also this yere the whethercock was sette upon Powlus steple at london"); and of the "mayde" who after "grete feates" resulting in the coronation of the Dauphin was "brent in Roan".

One of the most vivid pictures is of the indignant London women who took into their own hands the punishment of a renegade Breton. This scoundrel had murdered in her bed a widow that had given him alms, and then "bare awey al that she hadde" and took sanctuary at St. George's, Southwark. In order to escape from the country he took the cross, but, as he passed through the neighbourhood of his crime, the women "cam oute with stones & canel dunge, and slewe and made an ende of hym, notwithstandynge the conestables and many other men beyng there present to kepe hym; for ther were many women and they had noo pyte".

Even more noteworthy than for popularizing history and extending a knowledge of the geography and resources of England was the use of Caxton's press in publishing the laws of the realm. In 1489 appeared the *Statutes of Henry VII*,[10] containing all the laws passed since the accession of this monarch. This volume, printed in the language of the man in the street, is surprisingly readable. With none of the involved and technical phraseology of modern times, it gives fresh and interesting glimpses of the life and conditions that the laws were designed to remedy.

Strangers and foreign merchants were prevented from evading just customs by deceitful use of the law concerning "denyzeyns". A statute "Ayenst Tanners and Cordyners" provided in great detail for the prevention of selling leather insufficiently tanned and wrought "to grete deceyte and hurte of the kynges liege people". Another "Ayenst

Hunters " was aimed to put teeth into former laws by making it felony to try to evade punishment by hunting with " peynted faces vysours or other wyes dysguysed ". The injury done the public weal by such offenders is described as great, for " by colour therof have ensued in tymes past grate and haynous rebellyons, insurrecyons, Riottes, robberies, murders, and other inconvenyences ".

Laws treating of the importation of wines, of " Sylke Werke ", of liveries, of fairs, and of the cloth trade are full of picturesque details.

A stringent law prohibits usury (interest) " after ony maner rate ". A maximum price is established for woollen cloth (" forasmoche as draper & taylours . . . sellen a yerde of clothe at excessive price . . . to the grete hurte and empovershyng of the kyngis liege peple, byers of the same ayenst equyte and good conscience ") ; and regulation is also provided for the " Price of hattes & bonettes " so that they shall no longer be held " at suche an outerageous price ".

Better sanitation is assured by a quaintly worded statute banishing slaughter-houses from the precincts of London and of all walled cities. Evidently for many years the " poure subgettes & supplyaunts " living near had sent petitions and complaints " unto dyverse maires & aldermen ", but business interests had prevented any action by the city of London until Parliament took up the question. The situation of the great city is vividly presented:

" the whiche often times ben greatly ennoyed & invenemed by corrupt eires engendred in the said parisshes by occasion of blood & other fowler thynges. By the occasion of the slaughter of bestes & scaldinge of swyne had & done in the bocherie of seynt Nicholas flesshamels ; whose corrupcyon by violence of unclene and putrifyed waters is borne downe thrugh the said parishes and compasseth two partes of the palays where the kynges moost royall persone is wount to abyde whan he cometh to ye cathedrall chirche for ony acte to be doone, to the Jubardouse abydyng of his moost noble persone, and to over grete ennoisaunce of the parisshens there and of other the kyngis subgettis & straungers that passe by the same."

Another statute is worth quoting from, both as a striking social vignette and for the qualities of its prose:

"Item where wymmen, as well maydens as wedowes and wyves, havynge substaunces, some in goodes movable and some in londes and tenementes, and some beynge heyres apparaunt unto their auncestours, for the lucour of suche substaunces ben often tymes taken by mysdoers, contrari to theyr wylle; and after maryed to suche mysdooers, or to other by theyr assente, or defoyled to the grete dyspleysur of god, and contrarie to the kynges lawes, and dispergement of the sayd wymmen, and utter hevynesse & dyscomforte of their frendes."

"Such takyng of maydens, widowes & wyves ayenste theyr wylle" is made a felony with very severe penalties attached.

As we have seen, Caxton's vernacular books in the field of history and law are of considerable significance; but they do not stand alone. Two works in Latin must be noted. These, though slender volumes, or rather pamphlets, are important as the first examples of books printed in England giving information of contemporary affairs outside the country. The first is one of the earliest productions of Caxton's press, the *Propositio Johannis Russell*,[11] or the Latin oration delivered by John Russell as special ambassador of Edward IV to Charles, Duke of Burgundy, on investing him with the Order of the Garter at Ghent in 1470.

The address was evidently designed to strengthen as much as possible the bond of union between England

and Flanders following the marriage of Charles to Margaret, Edward's sister. Briefly paraphrased it ran as follows.

His sacred majesty Edward IV has wished to adorn his glorious Order of the Garter by offering the insignia to your most celebrated highness. Man differs from the beasts in his ability to form friendships and close alliances. From this social nature as a fount spring order, religion, and co-operative undertakings, by means of which the most savage nature can be made modest, obedient, and able to profit by religious training.

Following the example of the brotherhood of the Round Table in the great days of King Arthur, when so many princes, barons, and illustrious warriors were closely knit together, two famous military Orders now exist: one established by our English Sovereign, the illustrious Edward III, the other by your most excellent father, Philip the Good.

The speaker rejoices in the fraternal spirit that has united so closely these two Orders by making the head of each a member of the other, so that he who does homage to his brother prince in one receives homage from him in the other. The torque of gold which marks King Edward as a knight of the Golden Fleece, and the illustrious garter which will henceforth cincture Duke Charles, will be shining tokens of that binding tie that has been even more closely knit by the sacrament of marriage. May there spring from this trinity of affection a fair plant that will never be uprooted! A triple chain is not easily broken.

The address closes with a peroration invoking the new patron, Saint George, to guard the Duke, guide him to glorious triumphs, and make him a tower of strength to the Christian religion and to the King of England.

The other Latin work is a group of six letters,[12] edited and provided with a prefatory explanation by Petrus Carmelianus, who signs himself Poet Laureate in Westminster.

> If eloquence you love, these letters buy,
> Which e'en with Marcus Cicero may vie.
> Those writings ought to please the cultured mind,
> In which a copious flow of wit we find.

The letters in question are exchanged between Pope Sixtus IV, his College of Cardinals, and the State of Venice, and were printed by Caxton within six months of the date of the last letter. This made an important collection of original sources on a vital question of European politics—the war between Venice and Ferrara and its relation to defence against the Turks.

Pope Sixtus, who had encouraged the Venetians to make war against Ferrara, after the victory of the Venetian commander and the relief of his own territories from danger of invasion, became alarmed at the danger to Italy from the Turks and urged the Venetians to make peace. They, not wishing to lose all the fruits of the struggle which had cost them much, were not willing to do this. The first letter is from the Pope urging Venice to make peace. The second—shorter—is from the College of Cardinals supporting the Pope. The next two are from the Council of Venice to the Pope and the College of Cardinals explaining why they cannot agree to accept the counsel of His Holiness.

The Pope then wrote a very long letter insisting on peace under the heaviest penalties, secular and ecclesiastical. The Venetian Council replied, refusing in very respectful but very decided terms. The correspondence, as printed, leaves the reader free to draw his own conclusions, although the brief introduction presents the situation in a manner favourable to the Venetians.

As a whole, this group of Caxton's books makes provision for varied classes of readers in the field of public affairs, past and contemporary. Though meagre, perhaps, from a modern point of view, it was well abreast, if not decidedly in advance, of the time, and whether the result of a happy chance or of Caxton's deliberate choice, it contributes important support to the opinion that the output of Caxton's press gives evidence of his good judgment as a publisher.

NOTES

1. C. L. Kingsford : *The First English Life of Henry V*, p. 92.

2. See Mrs. J. R. Green : *Town Life in the Fifteenth Century.*

3. 1480–82. Kingsford (*English Hist. Lit. in the Fifteenth Century*) writes : " In no period of equal length can we trace a development of such great importance " ; and : " The victories of Henry V coincide with the displacement of French and Latin by English as the recognized medium of official correspondence." In these changes, he says, the most vital classes were the upper middle and commercial classes.

4. Kingsford : *op. cit.*, p. 114 : " The Brut, as its name implies, is a history of Britain from mythical times. It was written originally in French, in which language there are two versions ; the longer of these, ending at 1333, was probably written by William Pakington, who was Treasurer to Edward the Black Prince. Towards the end of the fourteenth century it was translated into English with a continuation to 1377." Kingsford also notes that of the two continuations of this, one to 1419 and the other to 1461, the latter was adopted by Caxton. See also E.E.T.S., 1906, vol. 131, ed. Brie. And Blades : *Biog.*, pp. 247–8, 255.

5. Kingsford : *op. cit.*, p. 129.

6. Blades : *Biog.*, pp. 255–9. Ralph Higden, of the monastery of St. Werberg in Chester, worked over with many additions a Latin compilation made up of chronicles and works on natural history by Roger, a monk of the same monastery. Higden died before 1360. In 1387 this was translated into English by Trevisa, who also translated the famous encyclopædia of science (*Bartholomæus*), printed soon after Caxton's death by Wynkyn de Worde. Trevisa was chaplain to the Earl of Berkeley.

7. See Appendix, p. 288 ff.

8. Babington, editor of Higden and Trevisa, for the Rolls Series, gives a full discussion of Caxton's " manipulation of Trevisa ". He says : " Not only are certain words replaced by others but the whole orthography is changed, so that the English is no longer the language of the fourteenth but of the fifteenth century." He also gives lists of words regularly replaced by Caxton.

9. Blades : *Biog.*, p. 249.

10. Blades : *Biog.*, p. 339.

11. Blades : *Biog.*, pp. 196–8.

12. Blades : *Biog.*, pp. 268–71. The verse is Bullen's translation (1892 reprint).

CHAPTER XI

BEAST TALES

> As thus where men full naturally desyre
> Of sondry thynges & mervels for to knowe.

HAD Caxton done nothing else for English literature but introduce *Æsop* and *Reynard the Fox*, he could not be denied a position of significant influence. For each of these may be claimed the distinction given by Carlyle to *Reynard* —that it is " a true world's book, which through centuries was everywhere at home, the spirit of which diffused itself into all languages and all minds ".[1]

Whatever may be the explanation, the beast tale has a perennial interest. Even our own age, whirring with machinery and reconstructing nature in laboratories, responds to the charm of Uncle Remus and delights with Mowgli in the life of the jungle folk. And in the " Age of Apologue ", as Carlyle has termed the fifteenth century, this appeal was particularly strong.

Even as the tale of Troy, or the *Morte d'Arthur*, gave the epic of a world—of an entire civilization—so *Reynard* reflected a cosmos in miniature, and one that was much nearer the life and interests of the ordinary reader than were the great romances. Epic in range of character and variety of its qualities, it had a homeliness and realism that went straight to the heart of the " uplondyssh man ", and a Machiavellian subtlety that roused chuckles of admiration in " grete prynces, lordes, and marchauntes ".

" A World-Saturnalia ", Carlyle has termed it, " where Wolves tonsured into Monks and nigh starved by short commons, Foxes pilgriming to Rome for absolution, Cocks pleading at the judgment bar, make strange mummery. Nor is this Wild Parody of Human Life without its meaning and moral ; it is an Air-pageant from Fancy's Dream grotto, yet Wisdom lurks in it ; as we gaze the vision becomes poetic and prophetic . . . here, under grotesque shadows [we have] the saddest picture of Reality. But soon Tragedy dissolves into sardonic grins. . . . And so . . . we have still a mirror . . . of true magic reality ; and can discern there in cunning reflex, some image both of our destiny and of our duty, for now, as then, ' Prudence is the only virtue sure of its reward ', and Cunning triumphs where honesty is worsted ; and now as then it is the wise man's part to know this and cheerfully look for it, and cheerfully defy it."

Caxton's translation of this beast epic is of special interest as his only one from the Flemish or Dutch.[2] Characteristically he chose a prose version, and there are many evidences that it proved to be one of his most popular works. The first edition appeared about 1481, and a second followed in 1489. None of Caxton's translations has been more frequently reprinted than this, and no modern form in English can be said to have superseded Caxton's version.[3]

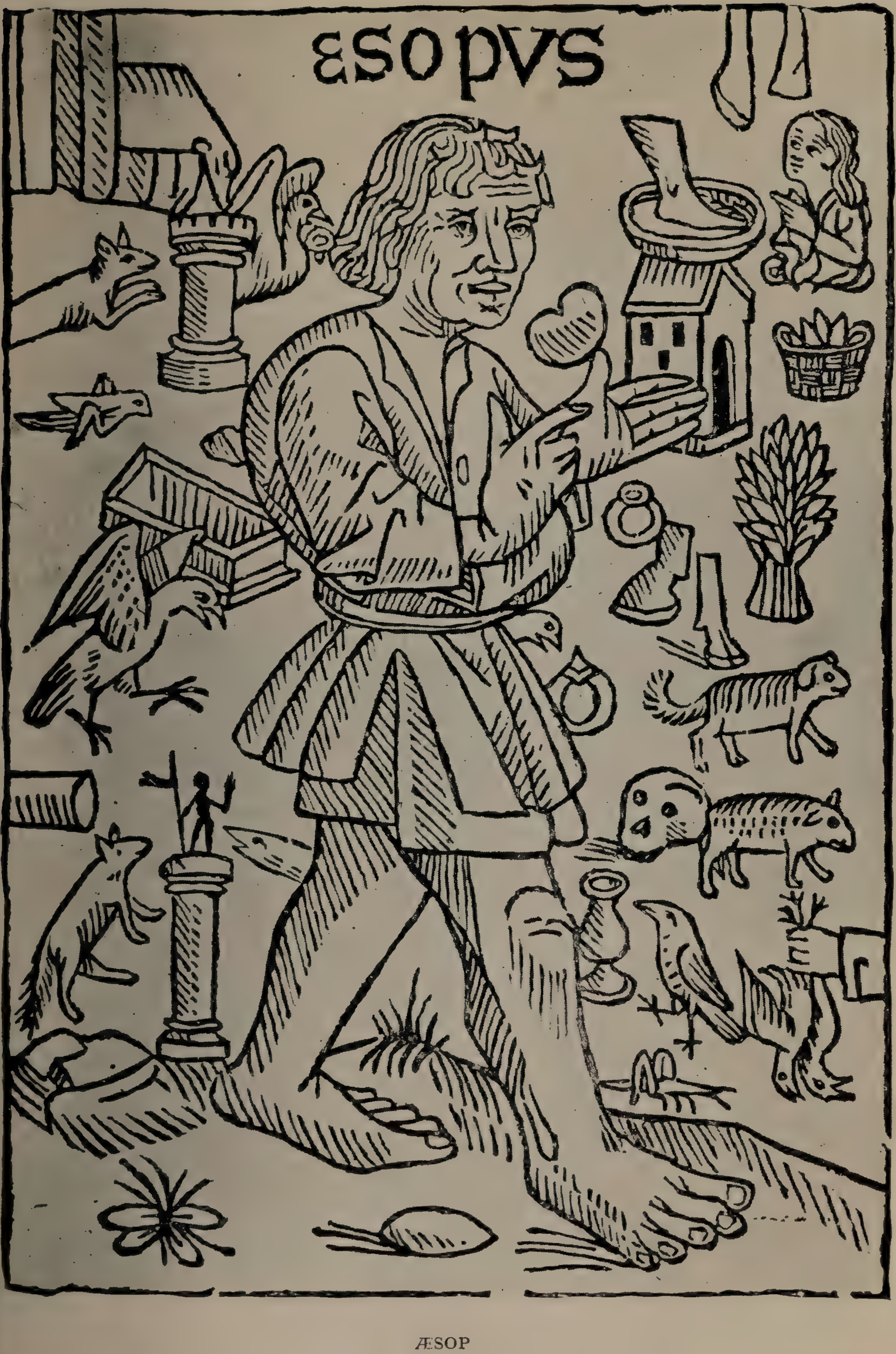
Although no English Reynard has appeared to rival in literary value Goethe's *Reinecke Fuchs*, yet from the time of Caxton it has been no mean portion of the literary inheritance of English-speaking people ; and it forms one of the many links uniting us to the common spiritual life of Europe. To listen once more to Carlyle : " Thus has our old Fable, rising like some River in the remote distance, from obscure rivulets, gathered strength out of every valley, out of every country as it rolled on. It is European in two senses; for as all Europe contributed to it, so all Europe has enjoyed it."

Even wider in appeal, though lacking the maturity of viewpoint and the subtlety of *Reynard*, was the *Æsop*. One of the greatest charms of fifteenth-century writing is its naïveté—the naturalness and simplicity that make it seem so spontaneous and fresh—particularly the prose—when compared with the artificial elaborations of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In this atmosphere the Æsop legend assumed definitive form, and the collection of fables ascribed to him expanded to its complete form.

It is far from our purpose to attempt any explanation of the complicated process by which the collection printed by Caxton assumed shape. Involved relationships of East and West, reaching back into problems of religion and anthropology, have created an extensive literature on the subject.[4] Apparently the Angevin Empire, of which London was the capital and French the chief language, gave the mediæval form. Planudes, a Greek (fourteenth century) monk in Constantinople, provided a vertebral column by inventing a life of Æsop, and Stainhöwel, a fifteenth-century German printer, added selections from Avian, Petrus Alphonsus, and the Facetiæ of Poggio Bracciolini. "Stainhöwel's *Æsop*", Jacobs has shown, "is the parent of all the printed *Æsops* of Europe". It was translated into French by Jules Machault, a monk of Lyons, and from the French Caxton made the English version, which issued from his press March 26th, the first day of the year 1484.[5]

This was one of Caxton's most ambitious works, and is now one of the rarest. Only three copies are known: one in the British Museum, one in the Bodleian, and one (the only perfect copy) in the Royal

PLATE XI



ÆSOP

[*Face p.* 158

Library at Windsor. In the *Æsop* Caxton for the first time made use of wood-cut initial letters. He also used many more wood-cut illustrations than in any other of his books. A large picture of " Esope " surrounded with symbols of the various fables occupies the first page. Twenty-six other cuts illustrate various events in his life. The fables, which are given independent form following the life, are each supplied with a characteristic cut, making a hundred and eighty-five altogether.

The life of Æsop—omitted from most modern editions—presents him as a picturesque combination of the mediæval monster and clever fool. Appearing first as a dumb slave, he outwits his fellows who have tried to take advantage of his lack of speech by eating their master's figs and laying the blame on their dumb companion. Æsop, condemned to be whipped, begs by signs for a bowl of hot water and vomits up the contents of his stomach, showing nothing but water. Begging likewise that his companions be made to take a liberal dose of hot water, he demonstrates to his master the indentity of the real culprits, who are punished both for the theft and the lie.

Shortly afterwards the dumb slave entertained a passing traveller with his own provisions, and gave him direction and active assistance on his way. That night the goddess of hospitality appeared in his dreams and promised him speech and increase of wisdom.

From this point Æsop, who is sold several times, entertains his masters by playing clever tricks, telling apt fables, and contributing pungent criticism and advice. At one time his master's wife—who resented the monstrosity of Æsop's appearance—angered by a trick that made evident some of her failings, left her husband, declaring she would never return. The clever slave, passing her retreat with ostentatious provisions and furnishings " for his master's new wife ", brought her back quickly, as he had promised his master, " more lowely, meeke, and obedient ".

A characteristic episode was the dinner provided for his master's scholars. Ordered to purvey " the best metes " for the occasion, he brought on course after course of nothing but tongues. In response to his master's reproaches, he replied with convincing eloquence, showing that of all good things, ranging from divine revelation to the greeting of a friend, nothing can excel the tongue. His master, forced to agree, but wishing for variety, ordered another meal, to consist this time of the " worst metes ". Again Æsop provided nothing but tongues, and again he argued so convincingly that his master could not punish him.

Sometimes, however, the slave rescued his master from difficulties instead of plunging him into them. On one occasion Exantes, while over-stimulated at a banquet, made a heavy wager that he would drink all the water in the sea. Confronted with the conditions the next day, he confided his dismay to his slave, who, as usual, was ready with a clever device. Standing on the seashore surrounded by all the witnesses of the wager, Exantes took the bowl and said that he was quite ready to carry out his wager as soon as one simple condition should be met. All over the world streams were pouring additional water into the sea. Of course he had not bargained to drink all the water that ever would be in the sea, and it was only fair that, before he began, measures should be taken to stop all streams flowing into it. Naturally he couldn't begin until that was done. Needless to say, he won the wager.

So great were the services of Æsop that his master finally gave him liberty. During the period of his freedom he played among peoples and kingdoms much the same rôle that he had previously taken with his various masters while a slave. After advising the Samians, he wandered through many countries. We are told " he wolde go sporte hym self through many regyons, nacions, and cytees, gyvynge enseignementis by historyes and fables ". Through Babylon and Egypt he " shewed his sapience ". Everywhere he " gate worship & glory ".

Although he was renowned " through oute the londe of grece ", the Delphians refused to honour him. They " by their envy mockyd and dishonoured " him. In order to have a pretext against him they put a gold cup in his " male ", and, when he had left their country, sent after it, accusing him of theft. They found the cup and sentenced him to death. In spite of the series of fables by which he tried to convince them of their folly, they threw him from the top of a hill, and a woodcut emphasizes the tragic end.

The fables which follow—with the exception of a few which have dropped out of many later editions—are those that are familiar to children of practically every family of Western civilization.

In attempting to estimate the influence of Æsop upon the English-speaking world, one cannot keep to literary terms. No great writer like La Fontaine has linked his name indissolubly to the fables, but they have formed a never-failing theme for carving and pictorial art, they have been woven into the fabric of social and political thought, and have passed into the current coin of linguistic idiom.

Above all, they have been the delight and instruction of generations of children. " Indeed ", says Joseph Jacobs, " in their quaint humour, in their trust in the simpler virtues, in their insight into the cruder vices, in their innocence of sex, Æsop's Fables are as little children. They are as little children, and for that reason they will for ever find a home in the heaven of little children's souls."

NOTES

1. *Foreign Quarterly Review*, No. XVI : " German Literature of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries ". All quotations from Carlyle in this chapter are from this article.

2. Blades : *Biog.*, pp. 229 and 341. His *French-English Vocabulary* might possibly be regarded as another, since it was originally French-Flemish.

3. See Appendix, pp. 220–221, for list of reprints. This work is so readily available in exact reprint (Arber) and in numerous rewritten forms that it is unnecessary to give anything in the nature of summary.

4. References to this literature may be found in Jos. Jacobs : *History of the Æsopic Fable*, London, 1889. See also *Encyclopædia Britannica*, article " Æsop ".

5. Duff : *William Caxton*, p. 61 ; Blades : *Biog.*, p. 287.

CHAPTER XII

ENGLISH POETS

The Mercer's son who reared his "Red Pale" sign
In Margaret's Almonry so long ago;
Who praised and printed Chaucer's spring-tide line.
Punch, Caxton Celebration, 1877.

THE printing of "Chaucer's spring-tide line" was the most important undertaking—in quantity as well as quality—of the first two years of Caxton's press at Westminster. Leaving aside the *Dictes* and the *Jason*, his other publications were the "small storyes and pamphletes" referred to by Robert Copland as the first work of his "mayster Caxton".[1]

During these two years, evidence indicates that he printed from Chaucer *Queen Anelida and the False Arcyte* (containing the *Complaint to his Empty Purse*), *The Temple of Brass*, or *The Parliament of Birds* (with some ballades), *Boëthius* and *The Canterbury Tales*.

In the *Canterbury Tales* we have an *editio princeps* in every sense of the word. First in literary significance, in poetic rank and in date, it was one of the firstfruits of England's earliest press, and the selection—apparently without the suggestion of any patron—of the first English printer and publisher.

Two of Caxton's early volumes of Chaucer were small books. *Queen Anelida and the False Arcyte* contained, in addition to the title-poem, Chaucer's *Complaint to his Empty Purse* and two stanzas frequently called "Chaucer's Prophecy", but really the "sayings" of some other writer.[2] The other, *The Temple of Brass*, is the well-known *Parliament of Birds*, together with several short poems.[3]

None of these three publications contained original matter from Caxton in the way of comment, but with the *Boëthius* appeared the first of that series of allusions to Chaucer's qualities which Miss Spurgeon has characterized as "the most discriminating" among the early references to the great poet.[4] In his epilogue to Chaucer's rendering of this famous dialogue of Boëthius with Philosophy,[5] Caxton calls him "the worshipful fader & first foundeur & enbelissher of ornate eloquence in our englissh", and believes "he ought eternelly to be remembrid" for "making the sayd langage ornate & fayr". The same epilogue informs us that Chaucer is buried in front of the chapel of "seynte benet" at Westminster, and gives the Latin epitaph written by Stephen Surigo, a poet of Milan, which Caxton had had carved on a tablet and set up on a pillar near Chaucer's tomb as a monument to his memory.

About five years later appeared *Troylus and Creseyde* and the *Book of Fame*.[6] The first mentioned throws no special light on Caxton as editor, but the latter is significant in two respects. It shows us first how Caxton solved a difficult problem in handling a defective manuscript. Evidently the copy he had lacked sixty-six lines near the close. What could he do in view of his great reverence for the poet—print nonsense or supply a necessary link? His solution is found in the first six lines of the last page:

They were a chekked bothe two
And neyther of hym myght out goo
And wyth the noyse of themwo
J Sodeynly awoke anon tho *Caxton*
And reemembryd what I had seen
And how hye and ferre I had been

With the least possible emendation he avoids confusion in the mind of the reader, but with characteristic honesty relieves the poet of responsibility for the inferior lines.

This work also adds evidence of Caxton's discrimination in judgment of the poet. A brief epilogue points out Chaucer's " grete wysedom & subtyll understondyng." His works excel all English writings (" in myn oppynyon "), because " he wrytteth no voyde wordes but alle hys mater is ful of hye and quycke sentence ". From him all writers since have borrowed " in alle theyr wel sayeng and wrytyng ".

But it is in the " prohemye " to the second edition of the *Canterbury Tales*[7] that we get the fullest light both on the conscientious attitude of Caxton toward his work as a publisher and on his regard for the writings of Chaucer. He explains that six years before someone had brought him a copy of the *Canterbury Tales* which he supposed to be " veray trewe & correcte ". He printed it gladly, because of its " noble hystoryes of every astate and degre", and for the tales " whyche ben of noblesse, wysedom, gentylesse, Myrthe, and also of veray holynesse and vertue ". These books he sold to " many and dyverce gentylmen ", one of whom came back with the complaint that it did not follow the work as written by Chaucer, for there were " many thynges left out ", and also " certayn versys that he never made ne sette in hys booke ". Caxton answered that he had followed his copy exactly without adding to it or leaving anything out. The gentleman explained that his father had a very true copy of this work of Chaucer " accordyng unto Hys owen first book by hym made", and offered if the printer would put out another edition, to provide him with this manuscript, " whyche his fader had and moche loved . . . how be it he wyst wel that hys fader wold not gladly departe fro it ".

Caxton readily undertook to do this " for to satysfye thauctor ". He was full of regret that in his ignorance of the genuine text he had " erryd in hurtyng and dyffamyng his book in dyverce places ".

At first, in comparing the two editions, one wonders that so much should be said over what seem, after all, to be rather slight changes, and yet to anyone who loves the music and the phrasing of Chaucer there is all of the relief that comes from at least the approximate tuning of an instrument that has been making a masterpiece irritate instead of please him. In various places the change of a word or two restores the sense or the rhythm. Such a line as " Me thynketh that it were accordaunt to reson " is made the normal " Me thynketh it accordaunt to reson ". The most noticeable differences in the *Prologue* are in the following passages :

Another Nonne with her ther was
Ful fair of hewe and bright of faas
That was her chepeleyn and prestis thre
A monk ther was fair for the maistre
Ed. 1.

Another Nonne wyth her hath she
That was her chapelayn and prestis three
Ed. 2.

Not o word spak he more than nede
Short and quyk and high of sentence
Sownyng moral vertu was his prudence
And gladly wolde he lerne and gladly teche
And therwith ful softe was his speche.
Ed. 1.

Not a worde spak he more than nede
And that was sayd in fourme and reverence
Short and quyk and ful of hyghe sentence
Sownynge moral vertu was hys speche
And gladly wold he lerne and gladly teche.
Ed. 2.

The tales in the two editions were printed in a somewhat different order after the first five, and mistakes—some of them much more glaring than those in the *Prologue*—are noticeable in the first edition. The notice, " Here endith the Pardoner's prolog and begynneth the Pardoner's tale ", is corrected to, " Here endeth the wordes of the hoost and begynneth the pardoner's prologue ". " His book homer ", in the tale of the Chanon's Yeman, is palpably absurd, and is changed to " his book senior " in the second edition. Spurious lines occur in the Pardoner's tale, which are omitted in the second edition.

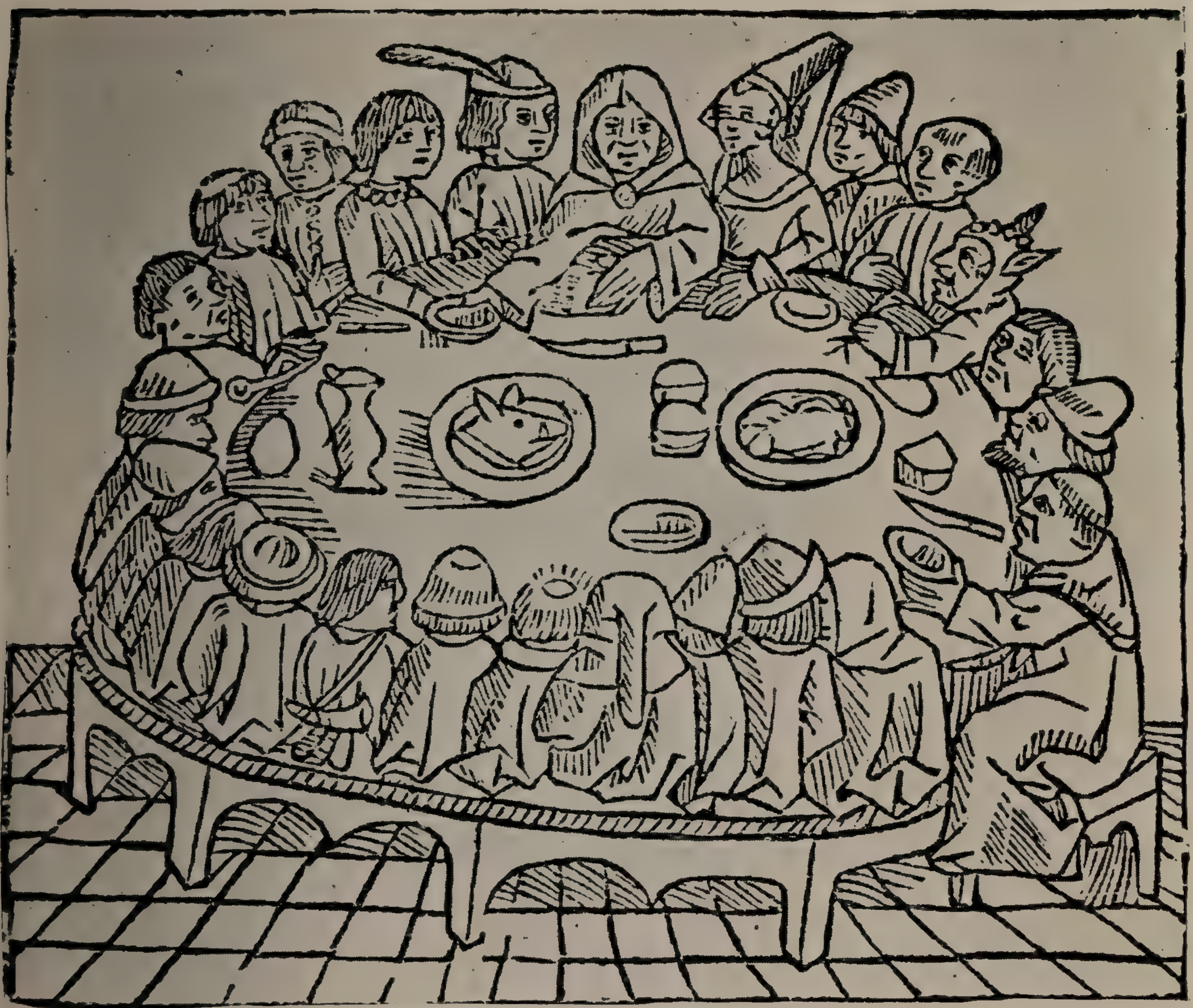
Taken altogether, the changes hardly seem revolutionary, but the very fact that they are so much slighter than we are led to expect is a tribute to the care that Caxton took to do honest work and to his tender conscience as an editor.

Toward the close of her great study of the history of Chaucer criticism,[8] Miss Spurgeon says: " As we watch this vast company of writers passing before Chaucer, and leaving on record their opinion of him, it is curious to reflect that the criticism Chaucer has received throughout these five centuries in reality forms a measurement of judgment—not of him—but of his critics." Applying this measure to Caxton, we find him taking high rank as judge and critic. He not only praises with engaging warmth and sincerity, but also with discriminating judgment shows appreciation of those qualities which time has established as the distinguishing elements of Chaucer's genius. In acts as well as words he proves his devotion. He reared a monument not far from his printing office to the poet's memory; he printed—probably all that he could obtain—the poet's works; and when he found that the longest of these was not so correct as it could be made, he went to the great labour and expense—evidently without financial help from any patron—of putting out a second edition, which he likewise provided with a series of woodcuts.

The discrimination of Caxton's Chaucer criticism is not the only point that differentiates him from other commentators of his age. No instance has yet been pointed out in which he followed the general custom of linking the name of Gower with that of Chaucer and lauding the two as twin stars of excellence. This exaggerated praise of Gower (and constant comparison with Chaucer) is deprecated by his modern editor[9] as one of the causes of his undue depreciation in modern times.

In his edition of Gower's *Confessio Amantis*[10] Caxton refrains from editorial comment on Gower's literary qualities. He speaks of the work as " maad and compyled by Johan Gower squyr, borne in walys in the tyme of kyng rychard the second ", and explains that the book " treteth how he was confessyd to Genyus preest of venus upon the causes of love in his fyve wyttes and seven dedely synnes ". Evidently he is printing the work " by cause there had been comprysed therin dyvers hystoryes and fables towchyng every matere ". One can hardly escape the impression that it is not so much Gower the poet as Gower the teller of tales that is prized by Caxton. Small wonder, indeed, that it should be so, for what a treasure-house of story is this " lover's confession " ! Practically all the favourites of the Middle Ages are here : tales from Troy, numerous myths, Diogenes and Alexander, the patience of Socrates, Pyramus and Thisbe, Constantine, Jephthah's daughter, Apollonius of Tyre, the story of Constance, and such alluring titles as " The Trump of Death ", " The Three Questions ", " The Travellers and the Angel ", " The False Bachelor ", and " The King and the Steward's Wife ". It seems inevitable that this should be one of the books selected by the printer who so thoroughly loved stories and believed

PLATE XII



THE CANTERBURY PILGRIMS AT SUPPER

Brit. Mus. Gr. 11586

[*Face p.* 168

in their value that almost everything from his press assumed the nature of narrative.

But in this publication, also, Caxton seems to have been unfortunate in his manuscript copy. Thomas Berthelet, who in 1532 put out a second edition, warned his readers that the " print copie " of Caxton differed in many places from " wryten copies ". He was shocked to find that " lines and columes ye and sometymes holle padges " had been left out. Such defects—he assured readers—he had taken pains to " correcte and amende ".

Berthelet, who took great interest in language, praised Gower highly as a model of pure English, contrasting his clear and simple narrative with the extravagance and affectations of the sixteenth century. Ben Jonson also gives practical proof of his respect for Gower's style by using in his English grammar thirty illustrations—for syntax—from him as against twenty-five from Chaucer and fourteen each from Lydgate and Sir Thomas More. In fact, it was a commonplace of literary comment to speak of Gower as at least the equal of Chaucer.

In regard to Lydgate—also the object of enthusiastic eulogy by his contemporaries and immediate successors—we have more direct evidence of Caxton's esteem. The first writer referred to in any way by Caxton is " dan John lidgate monke of Burye ", whom he mentions in his epilogue to Book II of the *Recuyell* as a translator of the third destruction of Troy—" after whos werke I fere to take upon me that am not worthy to bere his penner & ynke horne after hym, to medle me in that werke ". However, since Lydgate has written in verse and Caxton wishes to complete his account in prose, he does so with humble apologies for his own " rude and symple connyng ".

Among the small " pamfletes " first issued from his press were several of Lydgate's shorter poems : *The*

Hors the Shepe and the Ghoos (two editions), *The Chorle and the Birde* (two editions), *Stans Puer ad Mensam*, and *The Temple of Glas*.[11] These were evidently popular, for they were reprinted a number of times by printers following Caxton.

The Temple of Glas, like Chaucer's similarly named *Temple of Brass*, is a dream vision. The writer is carried to a glass temple on a great rock, in which figures " depeynted " on the wall apparently come to life. These various lovers (they are named and described) address the goddess Venus. She, moved by their prayers, brings together a peerless lady and a noble knight ; whereupon all the lovers, led by Orpheus and Amphion, raise a song of joy and praise to Venus :

> O mighty goddesse, day sterre after nyght,
> Gladyng the morowe whan ye doo appere,
> To voyde derknes by freshnes of your sight,
> Only with thinkyng of your pleasaunt chere
> To you we thanke—lovers that ben here—
> That ye this man (and never for to twynne)
> Fortune have his lady for to wynne.

Of this Mrs. Browning has written[12] : " The *Temple of Glas* forms with *Piers Ploughman*, *The Hous of Fame* and Hawes' *Pastime of Pleasure* one of the four columnar marbles on whose foundation is exalted into light the great allegorical poem of the world, Spenser's *Faerie Queene* ".

The Churl and the Bird is a tribute of the poet to the power of fable to convey moral truth. The tale is of an industrious churl who makes for himself a charming garden. Here a fair laurel becomes the favourite resting-place of a marvellous bird " with shynyng fethers brighter than gold wyre ". Morning and evening she sings so " that alle the garden of the noyse ronge ", and " hit was a very hevenly melodye ".

Soon the churl traps the bird, intending to make—

> Withyn his hous a praty lityll cage,
> And with her songe to rejoyse his corage.

But the bird no longer sings. She declares that she cannot bring joy to the hearts of others while she is a prisoner. She convinces the churl that it is to his real advantage to free her (after showing him the folly of his threats to roast and eat her). She promises him " three grete wysedoms " in return for freedom. He consents, and in return is counselled: not to believe hastily whatever he is told, but to wait until the truth is tested; never to set his heart on what is impossible; and never to grieve over what is past.

She then proceeds to tell him that he was a great fool to let her go, since she carried in her body a treasure worth a king's ransom. He believes her and begins to bewail his folly, when she sharply calls attention to the fact that all her instructions have been useless, since he is doing the very things he was told to avoid. Her statement regarding the jewel in her body was impossible and put forth merely to test him.

> A due sir chorle, farewell, I fle my waye;
> I caste me never hensforth me lyvyng
> To fore a chorle ony more to synge.

The same quaint atmosphere, in which animals teach wisdom and throw light upon the problems of human life, is found in *The Horse, the Sheep, and the Goose.* These three animals appear before the lion and the eagle as judges in a dispute as to which is the most useful to man and to the common weal. It is surprising how much light is thrown on social and industrial conditions of the fifteenth century by this spirited debate. Then, as now, the problem of peace and war was vital, and the lion and eagle—a truly diplomatic league of nations—decide that the goose—source of medicine, arrows, and pens; the sheep—donor of wool and symbol of peace; and the horse—servant and loyal supporter of man both in peace and war, all are essential to the public welfare, and must continue to fulfil their functions without dispute as to which is the most important.

The longest of the undisputed poems of Lydgate printed by Caxton is the *Lyf of Our Lady*.[13] The account of the youth and marriage of Mary as given in the apocryphal gospels is followed in general. Her life in the temple after her parents brought her thither at the age of three is emphasized more for the spiritual significance than for the narrative value of its detail. In fact, the poem—like the recent life of Christ by Papini and the *Speculum* of Bonaventure—is distinguished by its lyric and highly subjective quality. The conversation of Our Lady in the temple, her receipt of the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost, her prayer to God for seven petitions, with many other passages, illustrate this fact.

Before his account of the Annunciation, Lydgate inserts a long passage recounting the controversy between Mercy and Peace on the one hand, and Truth and Righteousness on the other, which forms one of the important episodes in the *Pilgrimage of the Soul.*

The poet's " commendacion of our lady ", following his account of Gabriel's mission and her reception of it, is an eloquent setting forth of the favourite figures by which the Middle Ages loved to symbolize the Queen of Heaven. Such is the vividness of his emotional acceptance of the immaculate conception that he cannot leave the subject without adding what proves to be one of his longest cantos. His wrath against " unbeleeful men that sayden that Christ myght not be borne of a mayde " incites him to multiply " exaumples " of miracles that tax human belief even more, and yet are generally accepted. In a fine heat of indignation he concludes :

> But yf that ony be now in this place
>
> . . . . .
>
> For to accuse the blessyd vyrgynyte
> Of marie, playnly this is my bone
> (But yf so be that he amende sone
> And axe mercy for his grete offence
> Of hir that is of mercy ground and welle)
> That he of vengeance have experience
> With Ixyon doun depe in helle ;
> And that the clapper of his distuned belle
> May cankre soone—I mene his false tonge—
> Be doumbe for ever & never efte be runge.

The famous commendation of Chaucer occupies a chapter by itself and serves as a second invocation —or rather mournful regret that the great master could not " amende and correcte the wronge traces of my rude penne ". This is placed close to the middle of the work, just before the canto on Christ's nativity.

In this second section the prophecies of Balaam, Sibyl, and others are dwelt upon—also portents at the time of his birth. The symbolism of various events and objects is explained. In the last canto we learn how Candlemas was instituted by Pope Sergius of Rome to draw into the true faith those who still clung to the custom of offering candles on that day to a pagan deity. Allowing them to keep the custom, he converted it into a service in honour of Christ's mother and her temple-offering in fulfilment of the Jewish rite of purification. The candles are symbols of Christ's triune nature. The wax is his body, the wick his soul, and the fire his divinity.

Again, the taper offered must mean to its giver three things : faith, works, and true intention ; otherwise the offering will be worthless. The poem ends with a supplication to the Son of Mary:

Thorow whoos prayer lord of thy myght
Graunte us grace, whan we be olde
And shal deye, to holde oure tapers lyght
To fore thy see where that it is told
Sevene chaundeleres al of pure gold
Fresshely with lyght stonde afore thy face;
Thedyr to come of mercy graunt us grace.

All in all, Caxton's treatment of the English poets of his day reflects great credit upon his judgment and taste. A true representative of his time, he shared the general admiration for Chaucer, Gower, and Lydgate, with just the amount of difference that marked him as a leader (tactful, not revolutionary) and a forerunner of modern tendencies.

NOTES

1. In his prologue to *King Apolyn of Tyre*, printed by Wynkyn de Worde in 1510, Robert Copland the translator wrote: "My worshipful master Wynken de Worde, having a little book of an ancient history of a kyng, sometyme reigning in the countree of Thyre called Appolyn, concernynge his malfortunes and perylous adventures right espouventables, bryfly compyled and pyteous for to here, the which boke I Robert Coplande have me applyed for to translate out of the Frensshe language into our maternal Englysshe tongue at the exhortacion of my forsayd mayster, accordynge dyrectly to myn auctor, gladly folowynge the trace of my mayster Caxton, begynnynge with small storyes and pamfletes and so to other."

2. Blades: *Biog.*, p. 212.

3. Blades: *Biog.*, p. 211. The short pieces are Scogan's poem (containing Chaucer's "Gentilesse"), "Truth", "Fortune", and the "Envoy to Scogan".

4. Caroline Spurgeon: *Five Hundred Years of Chaucer Criticism*, Int., p. xiv.:

> "On the whole, amongst all Chaucer's contemporaries and successors during the fifteenth century, the most discriminating appreciations are those given him by Caxton, and by the unknown author of the *Book of Curtesye*" [one of the small,

> early books printed by Caxton]. "The remarks of both writers sound curiously modern as to the qualities they specially single out for approval. Chaucer's vivid powers of description, his felicitous use of words, his freedom from longwindedness—in which he differed so markedly from his contemporaries—all are noted by Caxton."

For description of Caxton's *Boëthius*, see Blades : *Biog.*, pp. 213 ff.

5. For a full and interesting treatment of the influence of this work on the development of the various vernacular literatures of Europe, see the introduction to W. J. Sedgefield's translation of King Alfred's *Boëthius*. For Caxton's epilogue, see Appendix. One of the most interesting discoveries from bindings was that of Mr. Blades in the St. Albans Grammar School copy of *Boëthius*. In 1858 Mr. Blades found this Caxton in an old cupboard under the drippings of a leaky roof. The back, partly rotted away, revealed that it was composed of waste sheets from Caxton's press, including sheets from three works previously unknown. For full account, see Blades : *Biog.*, pp. 215–16.

6. Blades : *Biog.*, pp. 297–8 and 292–5.

7. See Appendix, p. 266, also Blades : *Biog.*, pp. 290–8. Blades has made the mistake in all his editions of reproducing the woodcut of the prioress under the title of the "Wife of Bath".

8. Spurgeon : *op. cit.*, Int., p. cxxiv.

9. G. C. Macaulay : *The Complete Works of John Gower*, 1901.

10. Blades : *Biog.*, pp. 271–3.

11. Blades : *Biog.*, pp. 208–10 and 205–7.

12. E. B. Browning : *Book of the Poets*, p. 123

13. Blades : *Biog.*, pp. 298–301.

CHAPTER XIII

FRENCH ROMANCES

This mocion sprange to sette the hertes on fire
Of suche as love to rede in every shire.

TO enflame the hearts of readers, and stir them to undertake and accomplish works of glorious merit worthy of perpetual remembrance, is the declared purpose of Caxton in publishing *Godefroy of Boloyne*. It might with some justice be asserted that there are two objections to classifying this work under the present chapter heading: in the first place it is not a romance; and, again, it is not specifically French. Granting that Caxton's translation is the first part of a genuine history of the first Crusade (by William, Archbishop of Tyre, 1175 to 1184), and that the persons and events therein are European rather than French in scope and interest, we have still ample ground for claiming it, in spirit if not in letter, as the first of the French romances issued from Caxton's press. No hero of the *chansons de geste* was braver or more loyal to his vows of chivalry than this youthful crusader who became the first King of Jerusalem; and, although the historian rejects the swan legend that has clung so tenaciously to the family from which he sprang, the great adventure of the first crusade is so filled with deeds of heroism and startling changes of fortune that no mythical elements are needed to make it a true romance. As to its being French, it was certainly from this language that

Caxton translated it,[1] and the hero was by birth a descendant of Charlemagne, although his childhood was spent in Brabant, and at the age of seventeen he succeeded to the March of Antwerp and the allodial possessions of his uncle Godfrey, Duke of Lower Lorraine.

The narrative of the Crusade itself is preceded by an explanation of the situation in Jerusalem, the building of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and its loss to the Turks, because of " thorryble synnes regnyng thenne in Cristiente ". In response to the fiery appeal of Peter the Hermit, " a Rowte of Cristen men " proceed with great zeal but little discretion to the rescue of the holy places. Embroilments and difficulties multiply until a real leader in the person of Duke Godfrey appears. He, with a power approaching genius, converts into victory not only the hostility of foes but the futility of friends.

Dramatic details, battles, and thrilling escapes follow each other. At Antioch the Christians, victorious after a long siege, were in turn shut in by the unexpected onset of a great host. Helpless in a city reduced to starvation before they entered it, only a miracle could save them. And the miracle happened : " a clerk born in provynce named peter " was visited in a dream by Saint Andrew, who revealed to him the spot where lay buried the spear that pierced the side of Our Lord. The spear was found, and at this evidence of divine favour " the people forgate moche of theyr meseases ".

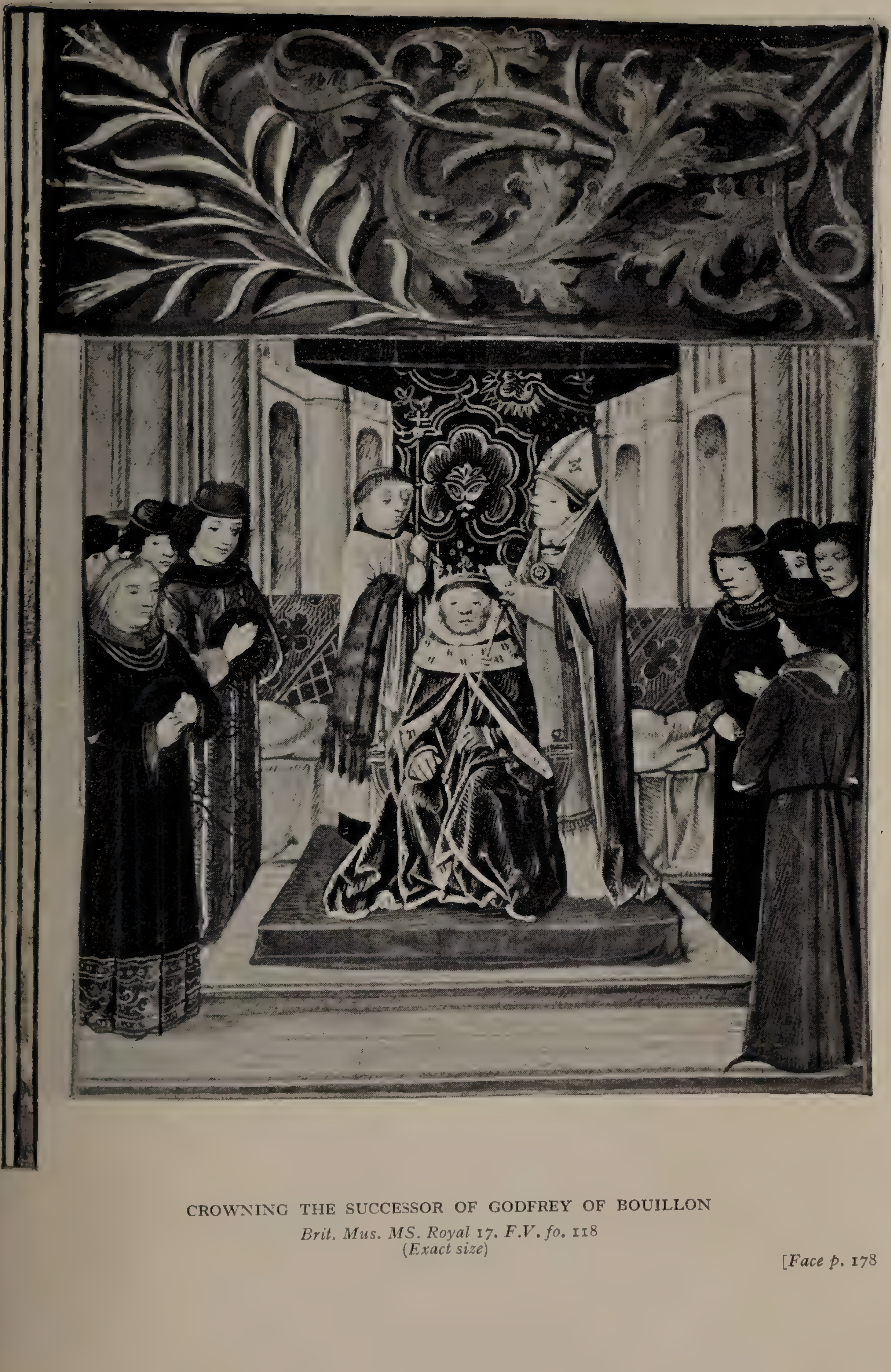
Nor was this all. When the Christians with restored morale issued forth in sortie to break the ring of their enemies, " a rayne or a dewe " like the grace of heaven descended upon them, so that both men and horses were " as fressh & al so light as they never had suffred mesease ". The victory that followed both inspired them with confidence and furnished provisions to go on to the completion of their vow.

In the siege of Jerusalem the beleaguered Turks tried the use of sorcery against the terrible " engyne " which was breaking down their wall : " therfore they dyde do come upon the walles ii old wytches or enchaunteresses, whiche shold charme this engyne ; and they had with them iii maydens, for to helpe to make theyr charme ". But their magic was as inferior as the Saracen machines, for the stones from the terrible catapult " atteyned the two old wytches and the thre maydens in such wise that they were smeton alle to pyeces, and fyl doun deed fro the walles of whom the sowles wente forthe to helle ".

An authentic miracle, on the other hand, encouraged the Christians, for " ffro the mount of olyvet appiered a knyght which was not knowen ne never myght be founden. This knyght began to shake and meve his shelde, whiche was moche cleer and shynyng. And made signe to our peple that they shold now retorne and come agayne to thassault ". A ruthless description follows, picturing " the pryse and takynge of Jherusalem ". As they entered the city, men known to be dead appeared upon the walls and were plainly seen entering with them.

When the time came to choose a King of Jerusalem, the only fault that could be urged against Duke Godfrey was his excessive devotion to churches and their service. He lingered at Mass, directed the work of painters and glaziers, and had such a nice ear for " the ryngynge of belles " that he " entendeth moche yf they discorded ". In fact, " oftymes his mete appayred by cause of his long taryeng in the monasteryes and holy places ". When it was discovered that this was " the grettest vyce " of which he could be accused, " they acorded al upon Godeffroy of boloyne and named hym to be kyng ". His refusal to wear a crown of gold in the city where Christ bore a crown of thorns is commended as a fitting rebuke to the

PLATE XIII



CROWNING THE SUCCESSOR OF GODFREY OF BOUILLON

Brit. Mus. MS. Royal 17. F.V. fo. 118
(Exact size)

[*Face p.* 178

" bobaunce and pryde of the world ". Caxton's translation closes with the record of his death.

The selection of this work was evidently the printer's own, and its publication was undertaken in an ardent spirit of combined religion and patriotism. The Turks, he explained, were threatening Christendom much more dangerously than in the days of Godfrey. They had taken Constantinople (1453), and in the very year that this book was appearing (1481) they had besieged the Island of Rhodes—that bulwark of Christianity defended by the Knights of St. John—and had gained a foothold in Italy. He urged all Christian princes to " make peas, amyte, and allyaunce eche with other ", for the united defence of their faith, and his dearest hope was that his English translation of the glorious deeds of the first crusaders might inspire his own Edward IV—" for as moche as I knowe no Cristen kynge better provyed in Armes, and for whom God hath shewed more grace "—to be the hero of a similar achievement.

Perhaps it was a like desire to remind English leaders of the importance of sinking individual differences in a united front against the Turk that led to the printing, two years later, of the six letters on this subject between the Pope and the Venetian Republic.

The translation and printing of *Charles the Great* was in response to the request of a special friend, Sir William Daubeny, keeper of the royal jewels.[2] It was also a natural successor—as Caxton explains—to books already published concerning the other two Christian worthies, Arthur and Godfrey of Bouillon.

This so-called life is a compilation made up of material gathered from Vincent of Beauvais' *Speculum Historiale* and the old French romance of *Fierabras*. It begins with an account of the early kings of France, covers the whole life of Charlemagne, and contains the events narrated in the romances of *Sir Ferumbras*, *The Sowdone of Babyloyne*, *Roland and Vernagu*, and the *Song of Roland*. Although it does not stand out with special significance among Caxton's books, it is noteworthy as providing a pleasant and readable prose version of this famous group of incidents, some of which furnished the theme of the greatest mediæval French literature.

The Four Sons of Aymon,[3] one of the most popular of the Charlemagne romances, appeared at the desire of John, Earl of Oxford, " my good synguler and especial lorde ", as Caxton described him. The prologue gives us our only knowledge of one of Caxton's lost books, " the lyfe of one of his predecessoures named Robert, Erle of Oxeforde, tofore sayd, with diverse & many great myracles whiche God shewed for him, as wel in his lyfe as after his deth, as it is shewed all a longe in hys sayde book ".

No manuscript or printed copy of this book, which he " reduced and translated out of French ", has been discovered. Mr. Gordon Duff thinks " it probably refers to the favourite of Richard II, the Duke of Ireland, who was killed in France while engaged in a boar hunt ".[4] There is one other possibility, Robert, the third Earl of Oxford, who took the part of the barons against King John and was buried in the Benedictine priory at Hatfield Broadoak. Sometimes accounted its *primus fundator*,[5] he seems a more probable subject for miracles in the annals of a grateful foundation than the later and decidedly unpopular favourite of Richard II. However, this is mere speculation, since no definite knowledge is at present available.

John de Vere, thirteenth Earl of Oxford, and Caxton's " synguler and especial lorde ", was an uncompromising Lancastrian, in exile in France during the York *régime*. Returning with Henry VII, he acted as Captain-General of Henry's army at Bosworth, and was from this time until his death (1513) one of the most important figures in England. Evidently he was pleased with Caxton's edition of the life of his "predecessoure", for he asked in addition "to have other hystoryes of olde tyme passed, of vertues chyvalry, reduced in lykewyse into our Englishe tongue". His own copy of the *Les Quatre Fils Aymon* was sent to Caxton for this purpose.

It is not difficult, even from a modern point of view, to understand the popularity of this romance.[6] The life of the four brothers, forced by loyalty to honour into resistance of unmerited wrong, offers deep-seated elements of pathos and tragedy. They were exiled from home, outlawed from Court, and forced to fight personally against their own father.

The human appeal of the four brothers in their gallant fight for justice against organized society is infinitely increased by their possession of the wonderful horse Bayard. Renaud, the eldest brother, may be held as a saint in Cologne, and the four may be pictured on peasant chimneys and inn-signs and made the subject of dramatization, but Bayard still lives in the popular imagination and roams the forest of Ardennes. Amid winter storms one may still hear his neighing and the clatter of his hoofs, although "when he seeth man or woman he flees away". And it is not among peasants only that he has continued to live. We are told that when his human namesake, the chevalier "sans peur et sans reproche," was called upon to surrender by Prince Henry of Nassau, he sent back the reply, "A Bayard of France will never yield to a cart-stallion of Germany."

One of the rarest of mediæval French romances was made familiar in England by Caxton's translation of *Paris and Vienne*. He gives no information as to why he came to publish it.[7] Unlike the other French romances, this is from the south, and is marked by the Provençal spirit. From the original "Catalane" it was translated into Provençal, and then—about the beginning of the fifteenth century—into French, by Pierre de Sippade of Marseilles.

The French translator in his prologue confesses that he has always loved romances and chronicles that relate the brave deeds of our ancestors. But some of these are impossible to believe; and because the matter is reasonable and credible, and the story is pleasing, he has selected the tale of the brave knight Paris and the fair Vienne to be turned into French—doubtless hoping that it might supersede the extravagant travesties of the literary form he loved. Had Caxton written a general prologue, we can imagine him expressing much the same ideas—perhaps emphasizing a bit more that the tale is one "sowning to vertue".

And it is a pleasing tale, this romance of true love at last rewarded. Vienne, daughter of the "Doulphin of Viennoys", is a Provençal princess, beautiful, gifted, and of steadfast loyalty. Paris, the son of one of the lesser nobles of her father's Court, first wins her attention by his skill in music (both of voice and instrument—a genuine troubadour), and then gains her heart by winning the crystal shield and garland against all competitors in the tournament. But her father is so angered at the youth's presumption in aspiring to her hand that he threatens his life if he remains at Court. Through long years the lovers are separated, until, after many adventures, the knight saves the haughty father's life and rescues him from a Saracen prison. As a result the lovers are at last united; "and sone after the doulphyn & hys wyf deyeden. And thenne was Parys doulphyn and had the possessyon of al the seygnourye, the whyche lyved wyth Vyenne in thys world fourty yere and ledde a good and holy lyf, in so moche that after thentendement of somme men they be seyntes in heven, & they deyed bothe in one yere ".

Blanchardyn and Eglantine is similar in general theme—a youthful knight winning at long last a difficult lady—but is considerably longer and somewhat more extravagant in tone and incident.

Blanchardyn, son of the King of Fryse, was a prince of such excellence that " God and nature had nothing forgotten there ". Kept by order of his father from all instruction in arms, he learned, through his eager questions about the details of a tapestry of the destruction of Troy, all about the equipment of arms and their use. Secretly he provided himself with the best equipment in the royal armoury, and taking the fleetest horse, stole from the palace to seek experience in the exercise of arms denied him there.

His first adventure brings his introduction to another great mystery—love. A dying man in a forest lies in despair at the loss of his lady. Blanchardyn, waiting only to receive knighthood, dashes after the murderer and ravisher, finds him by means of the " grete sorow & doleaunce " of the lady, and after he has " swiftli wallopyd that parte ", he succeeds in cleaving the villain " to the chynne ", in spite of previous inexperience. Quickly as they return, they find the wounded knight dead, and the maiden in her great sorrow also dies on the body of her lover.

Henceforth, even as strong as the flame of martial ardour is the fire of love in the heart of Blanchardyn. Coming to a great river, he meets the Knight of the Ferry, who explains that he is entering the land of Tormaday. Eglantine the Queen, known as the Proud Lady of Love because she has haughtily refused to consider any suitor, has so angered King Alymodes that he is about to make war and force her to marry him. The Knight of the Ferry, struck with the young knight, urges Blanchardyn to win her by surprise and become her champion.

Following the advice of the older knight and his own impulse, Blanchardyn spurred on, overtook the convoy of the Queen, drew up at her side, and swiftly kissed her, then flew ahead before they could recover from the confusion of surprise. At first the Queen was very angry, but she soon found a different emotion taking possession of her heart, and when the young knight appeared in the lists and defeated the Provost of Tormaday, she was ready to forgive him and accept his aid against King Alymodes.

After many adventures and battles, in the course of which Blanchardyn makes Christians of the Prussians, Alymodes and other enemies are entirely subdued, and Blanchardyn weds the Proud Lady of Love, amid " Justes and tiltings untill supper, and after supper maskes, playes and Princely devises ".

Fortunately, although but a single copy of this work of Caxton's remains, and that imperfect,[8] the prologue has been preserved. From it we learn that he translated it at the command of Margaret Beaufort, the mother of Henry VII, for whom (together with her daughter-in-law the Queen, Elizabeth) he likewise printed the *Fifteen Oes.*

This book, which he had sold " longe to fore " to the Lady Margaret (and what an interesting hint this chance remark gives of his probable trade as a dealer in manuscripts and perhaps books printed abroad, as well as his own), evidently met with her full approval, or she would not have " commanded " that it be printed. Now, coming from the Lady Margaret, this love of romances and desire to encourage their reading are particularly significant, since she was one of the most religious and public-spirited benefactors of her time.

Caxton leaves no doubt of his own belief in the wholesome effect of reading romances, both to inspire young men to brave and noble deeds, and to impress "gentyl yonge ladyes & damoysellys" with the need of steadfastness and loyalty, when their promise has once been given, to those who have undergone toil and danger. Such reading he believes fully as profitable "as it is to occupye theym and studye over moche in bokes of contemplacion". It would have been hard indeed for him to see the force of the criticisms which deplore his choice of romances of fabulous knights instead of Latin and Greek classics.

NOTES

1. Blades's description of this work (pp. 252–3) should be supplemented by the E.E.T.S. reprint, Extra Series, No. LXIV, Introduction by Mary Noyes Colvin. Miss Colvin thinks Caxton translated from the MS. of Louis de Bruges (*Bibl. Nat.*, No. 68).

2. Blades: *Biog.*, pp. 306–8. Cf. Appendix for prologue and epilogue. This is one of the rarest of Caxton's books, since there is but one known copy—that in the British Museum.

3. Blades: *Biog.*, pp. 343–5; E.E.T.S., Extra Series, Nos. XLIV, XLV; Appendix, p. 295, for prologue. There is but one known copy of this work also, and that an imperfect one. The prologue is known only through Copland's reprint.

4. Duff: *William Caxton*, p. 84.

5. See references in *Dict. of Nat. Biog.*

6. This has been delightfully retold in modern form (much shortened) by Mr. Robert Steele in his *Renaud of Montauban*, George Allen, London, 1883.

7. Blades: *Biog.*, pp. 308–10. Like the two preceding, this romance of Caxton is known only through a single copy (British Museum). The story was turned into Latin (beginning of sixteenth century) by the Bishop of Rieux for the two sons of Chancellor Duprat. According to Malone, it was given as a play on Shrove Tuesday 1571 at night by the children of Westminster before Elizabeth.

8. In the library of Earl Spencer, now John Ryland's Library, Manchester. Blades: *Biog.*, pp. 342–3.

CHAPTER XIV

CHIVALRY AND THE MATTER OF BRITAIN

> Pleasure to man there is non comparable
> As is to rede and understonde
> In bokes of wysdom that ben so dilectable,
> Which sowne to vertue and ben profytable ;
> And all that love such vertue ben full glade
> Bokes to renewe and cause them to be made.

WHATEVER may be doubtful in Caxton's life and work, it is perfectly clear that he did " love such vertue ", and was " full glade " to multiply books that embodied the spirit of chivalry. It is one of the paradoxes in the history of literature that from a nation of shop-keepers, a man from the shop-keeping class, whose life had been given to the interests of trade, should be responsible for that one of the first printing-presses in Europe most characterized for its output of romances and works on chivalry.

Probably to Caxton's long association with the Court of Burgundy may be ascribed much of his love for knightly deeds and chivalrous themes. His practical nature and religious spirit so tempered the choice and presentation of such books that they appear to have met with great favour among English readers of his time, religious as well as secular.

Evidence of this taste may be found in most of his books, but three in particular stand out as pre-eminent examples. Christine de Pisan's *Fayts of Armes* (which he translated himself from the French) set forth the theory and practice of military science. The *Order of Chivalry* (also translated by him from the French) might be termed the philosophy of chivalry, since it presented its relationship to the universal scheme and the symbolical significance of its ceremonies and trappings ; while the *Morte Darthur* of Malory gave a living representation of the spirit of chivalry triumphing over savagery and paganism.

That a woman should be the author of a military treatise has seemed so strange that a certain amount of controversy has arisen over the matter.[1] But the authorship of Christine de Pisan seems as clearly established for the *Fayts of Armes* as it could well be. Caxton asserts it in his epilogue, and her own prologue tries to forestall prejudice against her temerity in undertaking a " thyng not acustomed & out of usage to wymen, whiche comynly . . . spynne on the distaf & occupie theym in thyngs of houshold ". She is not moved by arrogance or presumption, but by " veray affecion & good desyre of noble men in thoffyce of armes ". Since those who are skilled in the art of chivalry are not " comunely clerkys ", she has endeavoured to help them in the instruction of others by compiling from the best books and from observation and interviews with the most successful leaders a treatise on the art of war as clear and simple as possible. She begs her readers to remember that it was the goddess Minerva who invented arms and instituted strategy and the rules of war. She closes her introduction with a prayer to this goddess for assistance in writing of " so magnyfike an offyce as is thoffice of armes " ; neatly reminding her that, since in early times the " contree beyond the Alpes " was named " the grete grece ", she can claim the tie of a common country, " & I am as y^{u} were, a woman ytalien ".

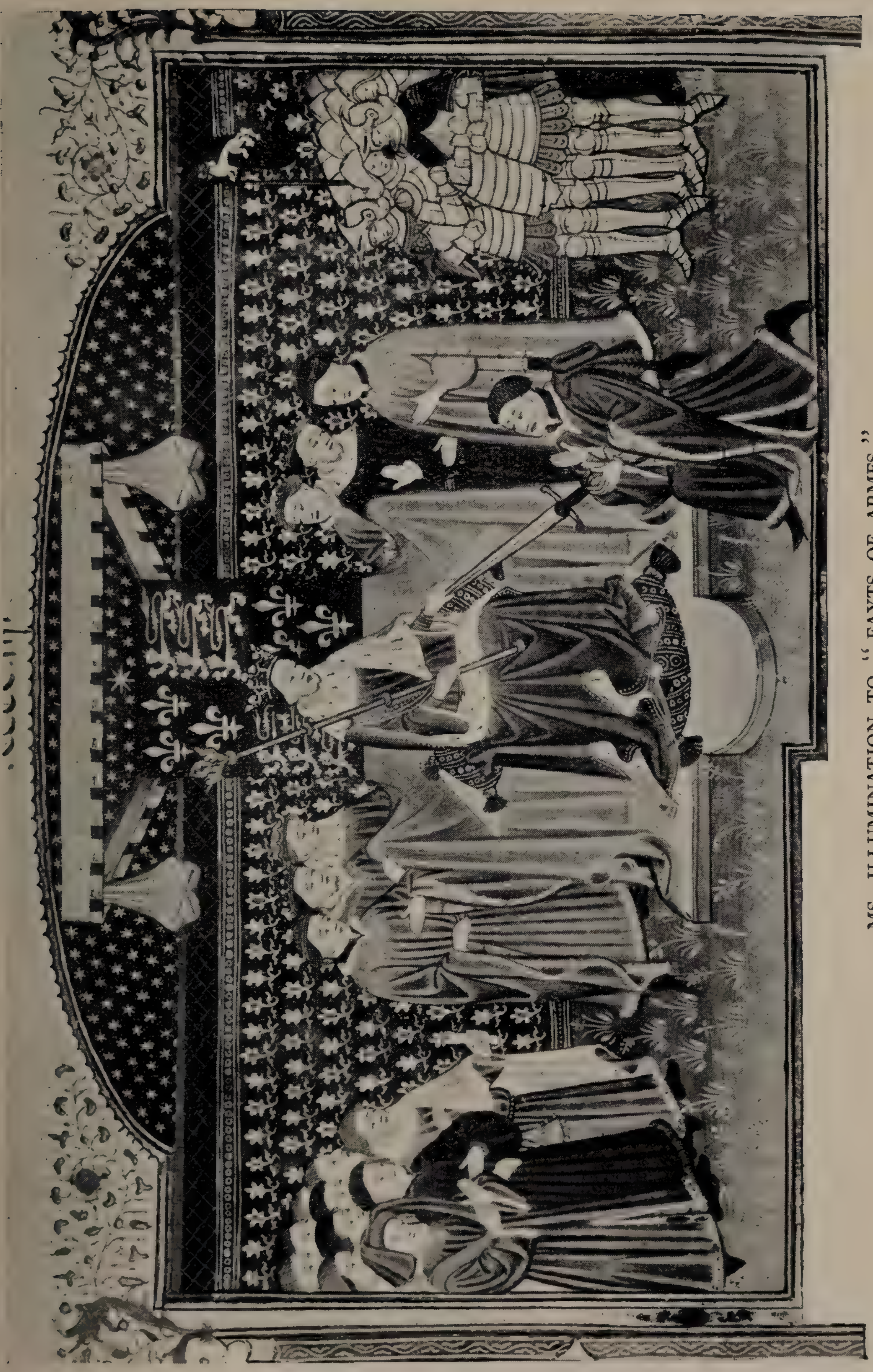
The first part of the work, discussing under what circumstances war is right and approved by God, furnishes many interesting points of comparison with the modern agitation of this question. She quotes from her authorities five things making just cause for war: to maintain law and justice, to withstand evil and oppression, to recover land or possessions unjustly seized, to exact vengeance for injury received, and to gain by conquest land or new possessions.

Although Christine honestly presents these points as they are found in her " dyverse bokes ", she protests as eloquently as any anti-militarist of to-day against the two last mentioned, and even in regard to the first three she movingly exhorts princes to take great thought before declaring war, for it involves " the lyf, the blood, thonnour & chyvaunce of infenyte persones". She gives vivid pictures of the destruction of Carthage, and appeals to common sense in describing the great financial loss. She urges that it would be much more profitable for a prince " to make some trayttye with his enemyes ". Tales and anecdotes illustrate her points.

The qualities of army leaders and officers are amply set forth. The list of requirements contains all the virtues that the Middle Ages—peculiarly fertile in analysis of virtues and vices—could furnish. The standard set being a bit stiff, since military men even then were not " plaster saints ", the saving clause was added: " at leste theym that have condycions next and most lyke to theym aforsayd ".

The training of boys; proper methods of handling and provisioning an army; the need of an intelligence department (" much prouffytable a thyng it is in an ost to have wise espyes that can wel fynde the wayes to lerne & undrestande the couvyne of the adversaryes "); precautions against treachery (" For unnethe wythout ony traytours, is ony oost "); crossing water and conducting sieges or preparing for them; means of becoming familiar with the psychology of the

PLATE XIV



MS. ILLUMINATION TO "FAYTS OF ARMES"

Brit. Mus. MS. Royal 15 *E. vi. fo.* 406
(*Original* 9.0 × 5.7 *mm.*)

[*Face p.* 188

opposing general—these and similar themes are extensively developed and illustrated.

The third and fourth sections deal with the laws and etiquette of war according to the code of knighthood. In the form of question and answer between disciple and master many knotty points and fifteenth-century difficulties are straightened out. A final section explains " the badges, armes, baners, and penoncelles " of " lordes and gentylmen ".

In the introduction to Book III Christine represents the spirit of study appearing before her in a dream and telling her to pluck fruit from the " tree of bataylles " (she was about to use a book of this name as basis for the rest of her work). Asked if she might not be blamed for borrowing so much, he replied :

" Dere love, to thys I ansuere the that the more that a werke is wytnessed and approved of more folke, the more it is auctorysed and more autentyke ; and therfore yf eny doo murmure after the gyse of evyll spekers saying that thou beggest in other places, I ansuere them that it is a common use emonge my dyscyples to gyve and departe one to another of the floures that they take dyversely out of my gardyns. . . . It is then no rebuke but a lawde & praysynge, when wel & proprely they be applycked and sette by ordre,—and there lyeth the maystrye therof ! "

This seems a particularly neat expression of the mediæval author's attitude toward his literary borrowing, which is so often slandered as wholesale plagiarism.

Caxton tells us that he translated the *Order of Chivalry* at the request of a gentle and noble squire,[2] but it is evident that he put into it a great deal of his own personal conviction. In all his prologues and epilogues there is no more emotional passage than the one in this epilogue where he recalls " the noble actes of the knyghtes of Englond " which were formerly renowned throughout the world and contrasts them with " the custume and usage " of his own day. " What do ye now ", he cries, " but go to the baynes and playe atte dyse ; and some not wel advysed use not honest and good rule—ageyn alle ordre of knyghthode " ! (Note that at the end of this epilogue the book is presented to Richard III.) " Leve this ! Leve it and rede the noble volumes "—and he follows with a list of romances picturing true knighthood. The whole passage is full of fire. Nor does the feeling lose force by the practical suggestions tactfully offered to the King for reviving an interest in martial exercises.

The book itself—a presentation of the high calling of chivalry—is set in a framework of narrative. A young squire, anxious to become a knight, sets out for a famous Court. On the way he passes the forest hermitage of one who has passed his life in the exercise of knightly deeds and now has retired to prepare for the next world by meditation on the " foure laste thynges ".

The old knight is described. He " was moche old, & had a grete berde, longe heer and a feble gowne worne and broken for over longe werynge, and by the penaunse that he dayly made was moche discoloured and lene ; and by the teres he had wepte were his eyen moche wasted & hadde a regard or countenance of moche hooly lyf ".

Seated together on the grass, he and the young squire—who is point device in equipment and the flower of courtesy in attitude toward the old man—hold converse concerning " the gretenes of the honour of chyvalrye ".

The squire begs to be taught, and the knight is quite ready to instruct, for he is aghast that men are so ready to give and receive this great honour without accurate knowledge of its requirements and responsibilities. The training of the aspirant should begin in earliest youth. As a child he should learn to ride and take proper care of his horse. He must learn to serve diligently, both in hall " to kerve at the table ", and on the field " to serve to arme and to adoube a knyght ", for without humility and obedience one cannot attain the spirit of chivalry.

The various offices or duties of a knight are explained. He must " mayntene and deffende the holy feyth catholique ". As clerks use the weapons of Scripture, he must use for the same purpose weapons of steel. Knights and clerks should always work together and never discredit each other.

He must also " mayntene and deffende his lord worldly or terryen ". This implies that he must use his arms not only against aggressors from without, but also in support of the King's justice. His it is to see that justices are kept " fro vyolence in exercysyng the fayt of iustice ". Jousts and tourneys and hunting " wyld bestes " should keep him fit and give constant practice to the virtues of body and soul.

It is his duty likewise " to mayntene the londe ". The " comyn peple " who " labour and cultyve the erthe " are to be protected not only with courage, but with wit and discretion. The true spirit of chivalry leads to wisdom and prudence, and has no fear of bodily danger nor of death that brings honour.

And, finally, it is for him " to mayntene and deffende wymen, wydowes & orphanes, and men dyseased and not puyssaunt ne stronge ". The knight must stand firm against injustice, cruelty, and tyranny. He must help the weak. No one should be permitted " to robbe and destroye the poure peple & not myghty, and tengyne and doo wronge to good wymen wydowes that have nothynge to deffende them ".

Before being accepted, a candidate for knighthood should pass a strict examination which searches minutely into his previous life, his religious principles, character, physical attainments, age, and family. Rank is important, for ancient honour and honourable conduct, extended in noble lives through many generations, develop qualities of soul which give the distinguishing character of chivalry.

Initiation follows. The ceremony should take place at a solemn feast day—as Christmas, Easter, or Pentecost—before a great gathering of people. After confession and communion the youth fasts on the vigil of the feast and watches the ensuing night with prayers. In the morning he hears Mass, makes an offering at the altar, and listens to a sermon covering the essential points of the Christian faith. Kneeling then before the altar and lifting up to God " his eyen corporal & spyritual & his hondes to heven ", he is girded by a chosen knight " in sygne of Chastite, Justyce & of Charyte with his swerd ". The knight then kisses him and gives him a palm.

The symbolism of his equipment is an interesting feature of the book. The sword, " made in semblaunce of the crosse ", recalls the victory of Christ over evil and is a constant reminder of his duty to maintain the faith. The spear signifies truth, which is straight; its iron head stands for strength; and the pennon attached to it proclaims faith and confidence against falsehood or treachery.

The helmet typifies modesty (it makes him look down); the hauberk is as a fortress against vices; and chausses, or leg-armour, admonish the wearer " to holde hym upon the wayes of justice and right ". Spurs suggest diligence and swiftness. The gorget, as it protects the neck " fro strokes & woundes ", teaches the knight that obedience will keep him " withynne the commandements of his soverayn, & within thordre of Chyvalrye ".

The mace, " or pollax ", is force or strength to smite. The misericorde or dagger, which is the resource when other arms fail, teaches him not to trust entirely in his own strength, but "that by the helpe and ayde of god he vanquysshe his enemyes".

Gauntlets symbolize gratitude, since thanks are expressed by lifting up the hands to God. They also remind one that the hand must not be raised for a false oath. The saddle suggests sure courage and the great charge or responsibility of knighthood. The knight is set upon a horse that he may be seen afar. The bridle teaches him to "refrayne his tongue", and to hold himself willing to be directed. The teste, or head-piece of the horse, shows how reason should go before the knight and protect him from blame or shame; and the body trappings of the steed suggest the "goodes temporel" so necessary to maintain proper dignity and to carry out the undertakings required in chivalry.

The "cote", or outer garment, stands for "the grete travaylles for to kepe theyr londes and their peple". The ensign, or token on his shield, commemorates his "fayr feates of armes", and should be jealously guarded and highly prized.

A section on "the customes that apperteynen to a knyght" discusses the virtues and vices with concrete application to the problems of maintaining knightly honour. Needless to say, the standard is very high, with special emphasis on "courtoisie" and love of the "comyn wele".

Bearing in mind the requirements outlined above, we are ready to grant the conclusions set forth in the final section: "Of the honour that ought to be done to a knyght."

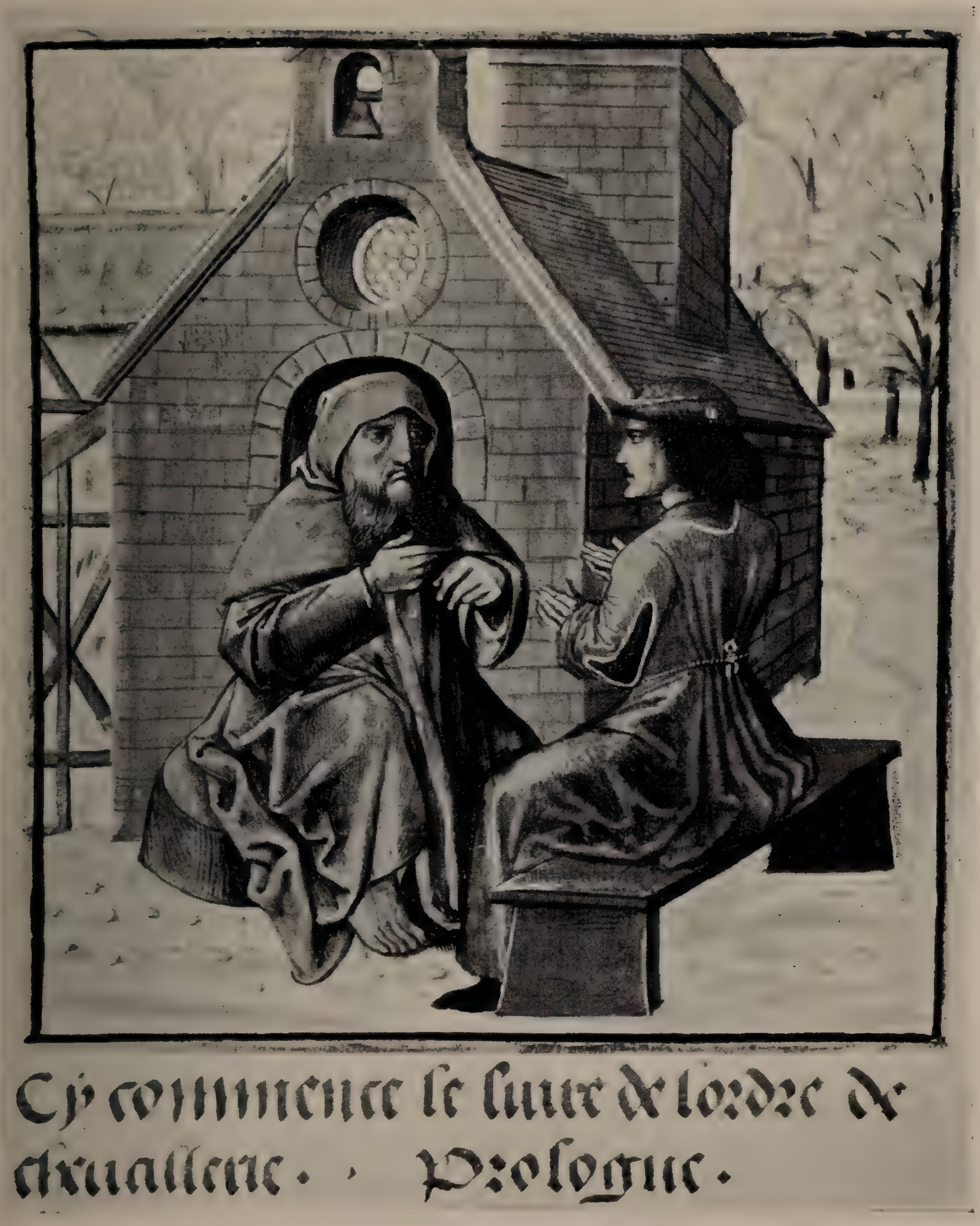
In spite of the old knight's exaltation of chivalry, he warns the youth not to overemphasize the importance of his own order; "for to love one ordre and to hate another is nothynge to love ordre, for God hath given none ordre that is contrarye to other ordre". This sense of deep, underlying unity in the social order is continually expressed, not only here, but in all Caxton's books. And such expression is but the natural recognition of a vital principle in mediæval society, unfortunately much weakened in our own age in spite of occasional reminders, such as Tennyson's "Flower in the crannied wall", or Lincoln's "A nation cannot exist half slave and half free".

As the youth prepares to continue his journey, the hermit puts in his hands a "lytyl boke" containing all his teachings, so that they may be remembered and passed on to "alle theym that will be made knyghtes". Very human, in spite of his recent asceticism, are the parting words of the old man: "And whan ye shall be newe doubed knyght, and ye shall retorne in to your countrey, come ageyne to this place and lete me have knowledge who they be that have ben made newe knyghtes."

These works are interesting and have a certain historical significance, but it is Malory's *Morte Darthur* that gave the spirit of chivalry a living body and made it a vital force in modern letters. Popular until the middle of the seventeenth century, it may be said to have attained its greatest influence in our own age. The literature—both critical and creative—that has sprung up around it tempts one to echo Caxton's exclamation: "byhold that noble kyng of Brytayne, kyng Arthur, with al the noble knyghtes of the round table, whos noble actes & noble chyvalry of his knyghtes occupye soo many large volumes that is a world or as thyng incredyble to beleve".[3]

And with all this mass of comment the judgment is surprisingly similar to Caxton's, "Ther shalle ye see manhode, curtoyse, & gentylnesse". The rare instances of censure, such as Ascham's horror at the

PLATE XV



Cy commence le liure de lordre de
cheualerie. Prologue.

THE OLD KNIGHT INSTRUCTING THE YOUTH ("THE ORDER OF CHIVALRY")

Brit. Mus. MS. Royal 14. *E. ii. fo.* 338
(*Exact size*)

[*Face p.* 194

" bold bawdry and open manslaughter ", or Tennyson's Victorian disapproval of characters and actions,

> Touched by the adulterous finger of a time
> That hovered between war and wantonness,

have furnished just enough opposition to rouse the ardour of defence ; they offer a challenge irresistible to every warm-blooded admirer, and have served as pretext to passages of eloquent appreciation from Andrew Lang and many others—passages that lovers of English literature would not willingly let die.

Malory's book is an important link between mediæval and modern life. The last English classic written in the mediæval spirit, it was published by the first English printer, and since no manuscript has ever been found, we owe to this text its preservation. For this alone it is hard to estimate the debt of English literature and art to Caxton. The work is a culmination of a long development of Arthurian romance that sprang into vivid life under the first Plantagenet Henry II. It was printed in 1485, the year of the Battle of Bosworth Field, in which fell Richard III, the last of the Plantagenet Kings.

Its theme is worthy of the pens it has inspired. Alfred Nutt declares that of all the results of the Norman conquest " the most important from the standpoint of general European literature " has been " the coalescence and flowering of a mass of Celtic fairy tales into one of those supreme legends in which mankind sums up and sets forth its ideal ". But it is not the fairy tale element only—Celtic or otherwise, as scholars may ultimately determine—that makes this the greatest of romantic themes. To the glamour and charm of the world of faerie the Grail motif adds depth and spiritual significance. It expresses with richness of symbolism the universal search for God—the great collective adventure of humanity.[4]

As to Malory's style, there is no break in the chorus of praise. Even those who deplore his lack of coherence and logical structure acknowledge the charm and vivacity of his phrasing. It is not alone the natural, simple quality of what Professor Ker has called " prose written in the tone of the speaking voice " that makes one love to read him, but there is the haunting undertone of glories passed and passing, of poignant regret for happiness outlived ; rhythms that suggest ripples of mirth and waves of melancholy ; and always the peculiar power of stirring emotion that comes with the magic of early imaginings—as Andrew Lang expresses it—" touched with the colour of many ages ". And not the least of Malory's charm, is that he never preaches or rebukes—to quote Lang once more—" as Tennyson makes Arthur in the Idylls ".

In regard to structure, lovers of Malory are divided. Many frankly admit there is none, agreeing with the opinion expressed in the Garnett and Gosse *History of English Literature*, " there can be no unity of action in such a medley ; what gives the book coherence is not artistic skill, but unity of spirit and feeling ". Admirers of this type seem to feel that it is a tribute to Malory's style that even without structure he makes his work so attractive. Andrew Lang calls it a jumble, but poetic and pathetic, with the charm of mystery and distance, and the end—like the death of Roland—more triumphant than victory.

Since the appearance of Miss Vida D. Scudder's study of Malory it is difficult to see how one can seriously maintain that the *Morte Darthur* is without structure. She shows clearly that, in spite of the confusing mass of detail, there is real unity and continuity of theme. Though the author may have been quite unaware of the significance of his structural plan, it is there, and since Miss Scudder has pointed it out we cannot fail to recognize it.

The matter of Britain surpasses other great romantic cycles in the fullness of its power to express the spirit of chivalry. Like the British flag, symbolizing triple allegiance in the united emblem of three patron saints, the pennon of an Arthurian knight proclaimed a threefold loyalty: to lord, to lady, and to Holy Church. And this was the result of a long process of development. The pagan epic set forth in the deeds of a Cuchulain, a Beowulf, or a Siegfried, a single loyalty—an undivided devotion to a great task in the service of family or lord. To this simplicity the Christian epic added in the heroism of a Roland the irresistible *élan* (in hostile terms, fanaticism) of religious enthusiasm. With both these the matter of Britain combined the refining influence of the Provençal court of love—the recognition of romantic love as a dominating motive and an incentive to nobility of character and action.

And in Malory we find these all represented in various types and combinations. To quote Miss Scudder: " Each loyalty has its exponent. Gawain, Arthur's nephew, through all his light and sometimes evil ways is doggedly faithful to his King; Tristram, the eternal lover, harps to La Beale Isoud; Galahad rides for ever after the vanishing Grail."[5] Launcelot is a tragic figure, because in him the three loyalties are felt in almost equal power, and, since they make conflicting demands, he stands as a type of the great human problem—how to reconcile the claims of conflicting ideals, how—as psycho-analysis might put it—to work out one's own integration.

The first seven books of the *Morte Darthur* show the development of the spirit of chivalry and reflect its conquest over savagery and disorder. Books VIII to X inclusive make Tristram the dominant figure, and show in various types and fashions the power of romantic love. The atmosphere changes entirely in

Books XI to XVII. Here is the mystic aura of the Grail. Galahad, the supreme figure, is accompanied by a small group representing various types of saintly achievement familiar to the Middle Ages. Then comes the reaction, followed by the best efforts of poor human nature to make the most of imperfections and to keep such remnants of ideals as may be possible to those who have failed in the quest of perfection. Launcelot stands out as the central figure, and no characterization in English literature, perhaps, is better known than Sir Ector's tribute to the memory of the dead knight over his bier.

Perhaps the work of Malory does confuse a reader by the mass of detail, but it does not follow that structure is lacking. May we not say that his was a medley or jumble like that of St. Paul's before the Fire? There was humanity, its noble ideals mixed with sordid interests and appetites, surging through the nave; there were numerous chapels for devotion to special cults, enriched with the resources of many arts, giving to the casual eye an effect of kaleidoscopic confusion; but in the heart of all, and high above, rose the great altar, symbol of common faith, and incentive to all alike toward high endeavour.

For no other of Caxton's books are we more willing "to take the labour in gree & thanke" than for this of Sir Thomas Malory.[6] To the English-speaking world it is one of the most precious treasures in the legacy of culture that we are guarding for our children.

NOTES

1. Blades: *Biog.*, pp. 335–8. In the epilogue (see Appendix) Caxton explains that this was translated and printed at the request of Henry VII. The manuscript was brought to him from the Royal Library by the Earl of Oxford, for whom Caxton translated *The Four Sons of Aymon* and wrote the lost *Life of Robert Earl of*

Oxford. This manuscript was probably the one now known as Royal 15, E. vi, British Museum, a beautiful volume made for John Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury, and presented by him to Queen Margaret.

2. Blades: *Biog*., pp. 289–90. British Museum Royal 14, E. ii, contains the French version made in Flanders for Edward IV. The original was a Catalan work by Ramon Lull, *Le Libre de l'Ordre de Cavayleria* (*Hist. Litt. de la France*, vol. xxix, p. 618). This is an entirely different work from *L'Ordêne de Chevallerie*, with which Langlois and Gautier have confused it. The two are printed by Wm. Morris (ed. F. S. Ellis), 1892.

3. See Appendix; also Blades: *Biog*., pp. 304–6. For the general reader an excellent bibliography is given in Vida D. Scudder: *Le Morte d'Arthur* or Maynadier: *The Arthur of the English Poets* For the scholar the *Cambridge History of English Literature*, Schofield: *English Literature from the Conquest to Chaucer;* and J. D. Bruce: *The Evolution of Arthurian Romance* should be consulted. O. Sommer's text with glossary and study of sources is the standard modern edition.

4. See Albert Pauphilet: *Études sur le Queste del Saint Graal*, etc. (Paris), 1921.

5. Scudder, V. D.: *Le Morte Darthur of Sir Thomas Malory and its sources*, p. 186.

6. For identity of Malory see Kittredge: *Who was Sir Thomas Malory?* (*Harvard Studies and Notes in Philosophy and Literature*, vol. v.).

CHAPTER XV

CAXTON'S INFLUENCE ON ENGLISH LITERATURE

> For if one thing myght last a.M.yere
> Ful sone comyth age that frettyth all away,
> But lyke as Phebus wyth his bemes clere
> The more repeyreth as bryght as ony day
> Whan she is wasted,—ryght so may we say
> Thise bokes old and blynde whan we renew
> By goodly pryntyng, they ben bryght of hewe.

FLUCTUATIONS of literary taste and changes in standards of judgment may be traced as definitely as the varying styles of architecture or of costume. Mountain passes, overlooking immensities of forest and waterfall, which are " hideous ", " savage ", or " melancholy " to one age, are the source of inspiration to the next. Cathedrals, looked upon at one time as " monuments of superstition," built in barbarous taste, become at another the highest expression of spiritual aspiration clothed in the noblest art.

In the same manner prose romances, visions, and allegory are discarded with contempt, only to reappear in later generations as inspiration to the highest expressions of the human spirit.

With the Renaissance, which followed quickly upon the closing labours of Caxton, new tastes were cultivated and new standards applied. Caxton was given credit for the mechanical introduction of printing, but censured for the material which he chose to print.

Until well into the nineteenth century the general opinion seems to have coincided with that of an anonymous writer in 1766. " William Caxton . . . has no doubt been instrumental in preserving many things which would otherwise have been lost. But the misfortune was that he was but an illiterate man and of small judgment, by which means he printed nothing but mean and frivolous things. . . . Whereas had he been a scholar, and had made better choice of the works that were to pass his press, it is probable many excellent performances now lost would have been secured to us . . . but as it is, Caxton's works are valuable for little else than as being early performances in the Art of Printing."

Classicists, from Gawin Douglas at the beginning of the sixteenth century to Gibbon toward the close of the eighteenth, had only scorn or regret for his work. Douglas resented his *Eneydos* as a perversion of Virgil, declaring the two " na mare like than the Deivil and Sanct Austyn,—have he na thank tharfor " ! Gibbon more urbanely deplored that Caxton " was reduced to comply with the vicious taste of his readers ; to satisfy the nobles with treatises on heraldry, hawking, and the game of chess ; and to amuse the popular credulity with romances of fabulous knights and legends of more fabulous saints ". Mournfully he concluded : " The world is not indebted to England for one first edition of a classic author."

Disraeli voiced the same feeling : " As a printer without erudition, Caxton would naturally accommodate himself to the tastes of his age . . . mindful of his commercial interests . . . he left the glory of restoring the classical writers of antiquity, which he could not read, to the learned printers of Italy."

Critics of this type were not embarrassed by their ignorance of Caxton's work or of his attainments. Since the books were of no value, why should the critics know more of them than the titles " given by Mr. Lewis and Mr. Ames "—as the anonymous commentator confessed? And what difference did it make to Gibbon that the treatise on heraldry and hawking was not printed by Caxton—did not the "vicious taste" of the public remain unchanged? Convinced that England's first printer was an ignorant man without literary taste, they believed that his use of the new invention purely for commercial purposes had hindered the development of English literature and lost for his country a golden opportunity of gaining distinction and prestige in the new learning.

As to the last point, of course they were right. But even before the romantic movement had widened the scope of criticism and brought men to see that in the kingdom of literature there are many mansions, those who really knew something of Caxton and his books protested against the unfair reflections upon his attainments. His more recent biographers (Knight, Le Roux de Lincy, Blades, and Duff) have met the challenge squarely and pointed out that he translated from three languages—French, Latin, and Dutch—with a high degree of excellence, an astonishingly large body of literature, much of which has proved of the greatest value even to-day. Would kings and princesses have asked him to make translations, and noblemen like Earl Rivers have brought him their writings " to oversee " if he had been illiterate? Would he have printed the second edition of the *Canterbury Tales*, or gone so deeply into a work like the *Golden Legend*, in which he was barely saved from failure by the assistance of the Earl of Arundel, had he been governed entirely by commercial interests?

In reference to printing the classics, Duff has well shown that England would have profited little by the duplication of works which foreign presses were pouring forth in such numbers that they could not be sold. " Caxton's work was infinitely more valuable. He printed all the English poetry of any moment then in existence. . . . He printed the available English chronicles. . . . and the great romances. . . . While other printers employed their presses on the dead languages, he worked at the living. He gave to the people the classics of their own land, and at a time when the character of our literary tongue was being settled did more than any other man before or since has done to establish the English language."

After a survey of Caxton's books as an outgrowth of his life and the life of those about him, one feels that he really was significant to an extent that has not been generally recognized in the history of English literature. The influence which he introduced and extended over an ever-widening circle of readers was not imposed from outside, nor from above, but sprang from the very heart of the most vital force of fifteenth-century England. As Governor of the Merchant Adventurers abroad, Caxton was for years the central figure of that company, remarkable for its vivid life, which made successful war against the monopoly of the staple and fostered the spirit of initiative in civic and commercial affairs.

This spirit of initiative Caxton carried over into his activities as editor and printer. Other countries might follow the laws laid upon them by the revival of learning, but he, although he learned the new art by working on a Latin book, made use of it immediately in the service of his native tongue.

Too simple-minded and humble to dream of reforming the taste of his countrymen, or of remoulding their ideas according to some foreign pattern, he made use of the wonderful new invention to express and preserve what seemed to him best in the literature of his time. A very large amount of this literature was available only to the limited number of Englishmen who knew

French and Latin. Caxton's translations, together with those he obtained from others, revolutionized English literary prose. Both in quantity and quality the contribution of his press in this field is so remarkable that it is worthy of a study in itself, not merely for its effect upon the language, but for its significance in the general development of English literature.

An interesting parallel might be drawn between the literary work of Caxton and that of King Alfred. Both were pre-eminently translators and diffusers of knowledge. One brought into existence the first body of written prose in the English tongue; the other first put into print, and enormously extended the possibilities of, English prose with the effect of greatly increasing both writers and readers. Both were popularizers in the best sense of the term. They were eager to extend knowledge beyond the limited circle of nobles and scholars " to thende that many myght come to honoure and worshyppe ". Both took books which they thought " most needful for the people to know ", and made them intelligible and interesting to the ordinary individual.

As King Alfred in compiling his laws did not feel that he could include novelties of his own, but exercised his judgment in choosing the best and dropping out what his own experience and that of his ancestors had shown useless or harmful, so Caxton with like conservatism printed what his own judgment and that of the friends and patrons he admired regarded as best in the letters of his time.

In their spirit of devout reverence for religion and humble devotion to their Church in its forms and ceremonies, the two men were alike. They shared, too, a passionate love for the brave deeds of heroes remembered in the songs of the people. The loss of the book in which King Alfred treasured his collection of popular tales is one of the tragedies of literary history. Fortunately the romances that Caxton loved have not met a similar fate, though we must remember that such would have happened, but for Caxton's printing, to the greatest of them all, Malory's *Morte Darthur*.

Modesty, simplicity, and almost childlike absence of affectation or striving for effect, are characteristics of both men. Awkwardnesses of expression and lack of logical connections they have, too, in common. Neither had received the conventional training for a literary career, and both carried on their work of translation in the midst of distractions inevitable to a life of administrative detail. King Alfred's pathetic "gif wē ðā stillnesse habbað" (if we have the leisure) might well have been echoed by Caxton.

Of course there were differences. The great King had more dignity and his writings are more marked by elevation of thought and style. On the other hand, Caxton had spontaneity and a vein of humour which his royal predecessor lacked. The epilogue to Earl Rivers's *Dictes* (treating of the Earl's omission of Socrates's sayings "towchyng women") and the anecdote of the pompous prelate, related at the close of *Æsop*, are given in a manner not unworthy of Chaucer himself.

A point not sufficiently recognized in considering the influence of other nations on English literature is Caxton's transfusion of a new element into the literary spirit of England—the Burgundian. Probably because the works he translated were in the French language, it has been generally taken for granted that Caxton's work merely carried on what had long been the dominant Court element—French. This is a superficial view. Burgundy, a powerful rival of France, differed from the latter kingdom as distinctly and in as many respects as did other nations. And Caxton was as familiar with the Flemish as with the

French section of it—witness his *Reynard the Fox*. The researches of William Blades showed that every one of Caxton's books drawn from a source outside of England can be traced to the libraries of Bruges. This close connection with the Netherlands may have had some influence in linking England with the Germanic centres so important during the Reformation.

Although classicists have been severe with Caxton, insisting that age, which "frettyth all away", has only done service to letters in obscuring his work, their opinion is not shared by modern publishers. A glance over the list of Caxton reprints shows a significant revival of interest during the nineteenth century in a large proportion of the books published by him. Some of the most beautiful books produced by William Morris at the Kelmscott Press are reprints from Caxton. His *Godfrey of Boloyne* is considered the finest piece of pure printing he produced. Besides romances, he selected *Reynard*, *The Order of Chivalry*, and *The Golden Legend*, and by his " goodly pryntyng " made them " bryght of hewe " for the lover of books.

Even from the narrower view-point of service rendered to the Renaissance, he is not entirely without claim to gratitude. He referred with special warmth to lovers of the new learning, as in his lament over the death of John Tiptoft, Earl of Worcester. And in his books themselves may be found distinct foreshadowing of that love for classical antiquity which was to become the literary passion of the succeeding generation. Not only did he give the stories of Troy, Jason, Æneas, and Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, but he published several editions of Cato's distichs, Cicero's *Old Age* and *Friendship* (translation) and the *Dictes and Sayings of the Philosophers*.

But the most important service he rendered to the revival of learning was the systematic way in which he proceeded to enlarge the reading public in various directions. To be sure, his romances and books on chivalry were " not for every rude and uplandish man ", but he published other books which he tells us were specially designed for use " emonge the people " and for the " erudicion of the ygnorant ". Books for children and for old people, and special books for women were also provided. And he took pains to make these books interesting.

Who can doubt that the creation of a public capable of understanding and responding to genuine literature was of more importance at this time than a supply of Greek and Latin texts ? It was the soil thus prepared that enabled the native genius of England to develop so that it assimilated the mass of material brought in by the new learning, and was stimulated by it to fuller expression of native themes and indigenous ideas, instead of being overwhelmed and content to imitate classic models.

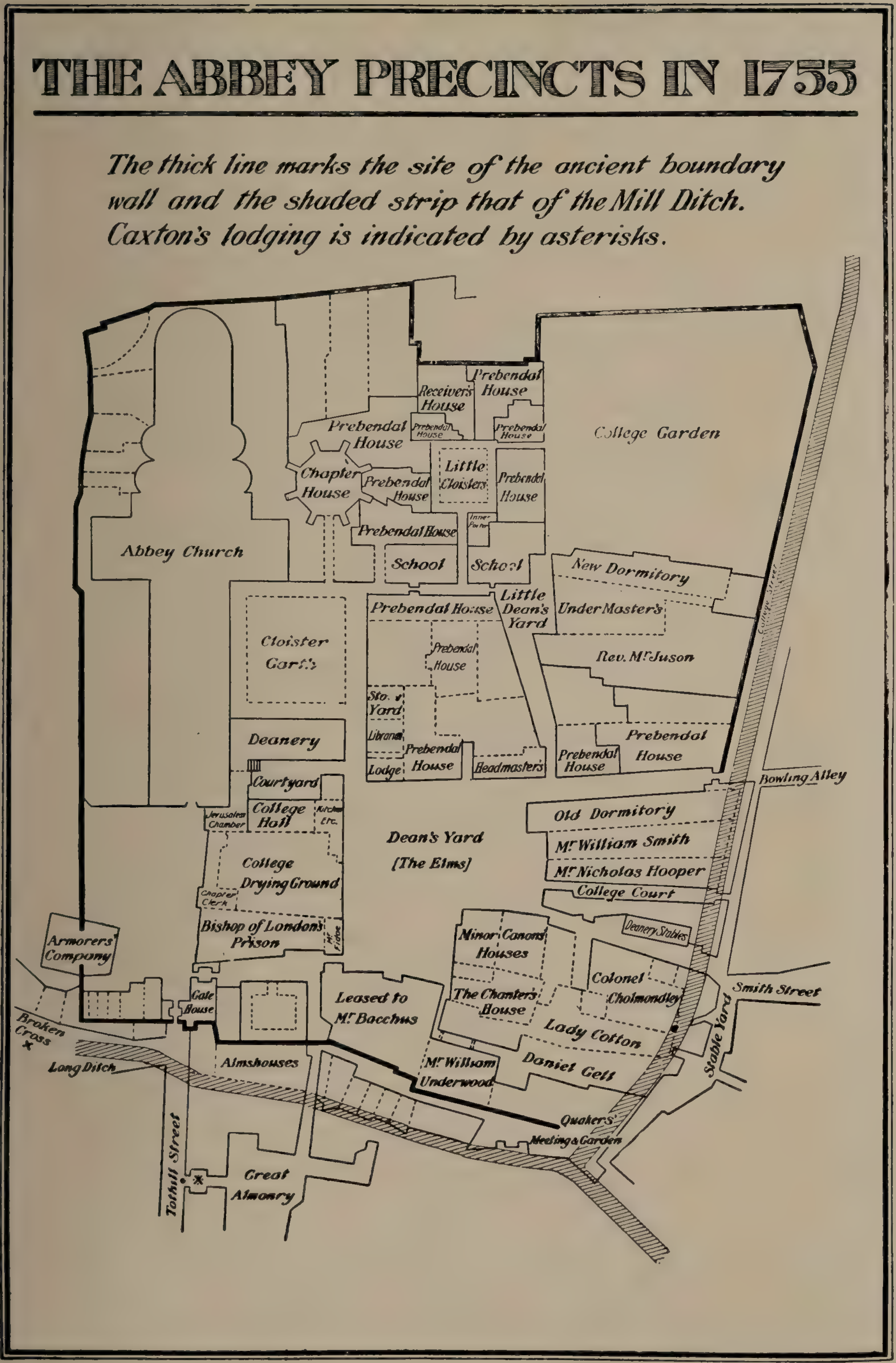
Lecturing on the first century of the English Press, Professor A. W. Pollard recently suggested that " the general slowness of our intellectual advance may perhaps be regarded as the price we paid for Shakespeare and the other Elizabethan dramatists and song writers." Could there be found a critic with vision so narrow as to regret this price ?

After granting all the defects that carpers have discovered in the father of English printing—that he did not immediately give England a position of leadership in the new learning, that he was not an artist in types or in illustrations, that he did not print the Bible in English and thus make England a leader in the Reformation, that he was one of the people and not a scholar and reformer—there still remain ample grounds for gratitude that it was he and " not Launcelot, nor another ", that was called to the kingdom of English letters for this important task. " Homeliness ", it has been said, " best expresses the qualities of his work and of his press." In its best sense this can be accepted and echoed as a tribute by any one who grows to love and respect him through the fuller knowledge that careful study gives.

The perspective of time has shown in many cases that it is not always the intellect which turns the human soul into new fields of development, nor is it the scholar alone who renders great service to his race. Was it not Richardson rather than Fielding who first gave the novel its modern form, and is it not Shakespeare rather than Jonson or Bacon who represents to us most truly the Elizabethan age?

It is hard to see how any student of English literature to-day who takes the trouble to become really acquainted with Caxton's work and the period it represents can fail to recognize how much the later development of this literature owes to his sound judgment and instinctively right critical sense. For Italy, for France, for Germany other influences led to different results, no doubt better for them; but fortunately the lines of growth for English letters followed a distinctively national design. And it is only fair that those who take pride in thinking that their native tongue has made them share in the priceless inheritance of a literature unlike all others should realize the importance of William Caxton, not only because he gave to England printing, but because he considered the new invention merely as a means of expression for the best in the life of his time and his people, and thus promoted that natural growth which has given English literature its character and distinction.

PLATE XVI



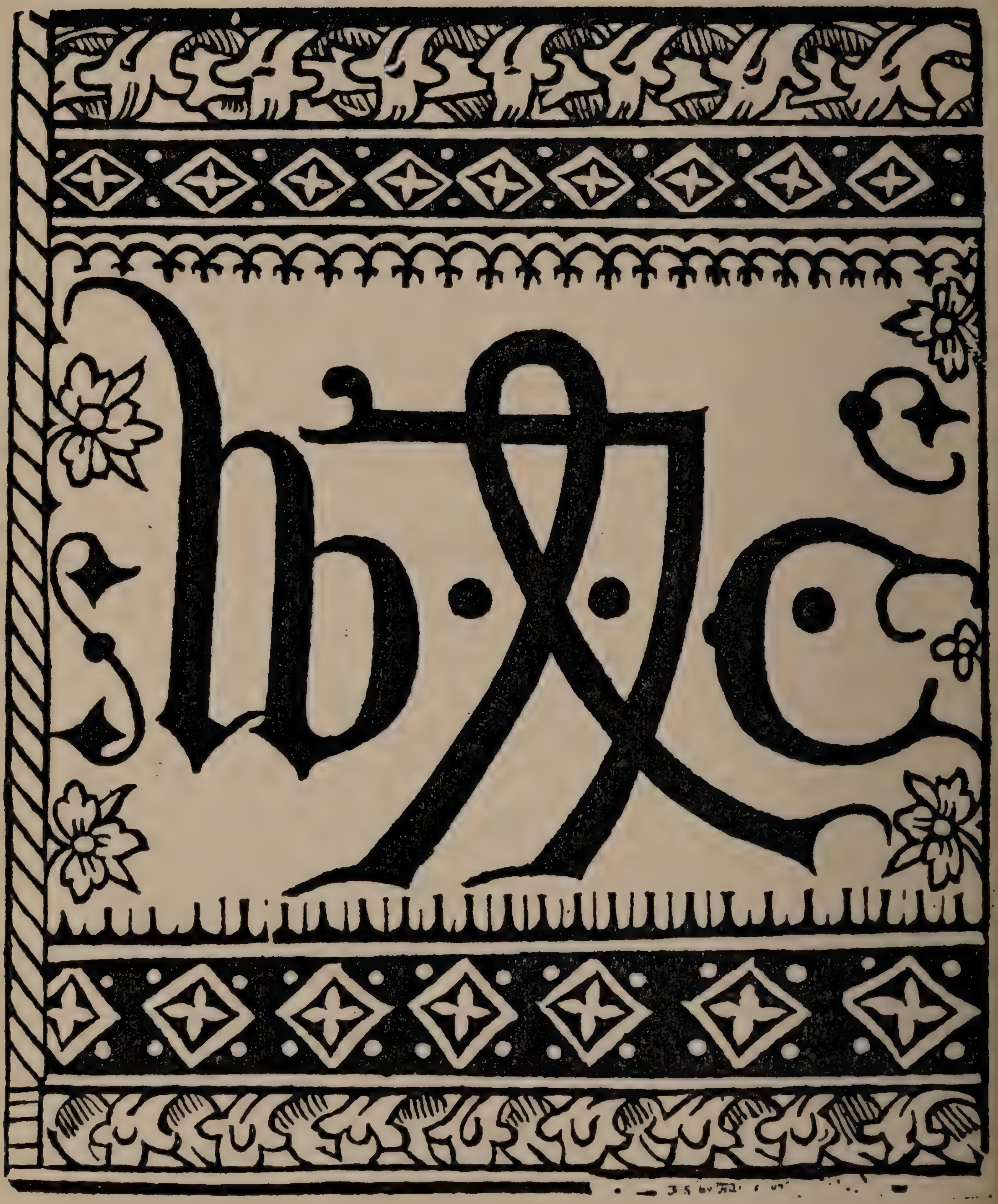
THE ABBEY PRECINCTS IN 1755

The thick line marks the site of the ancient boundary wall and the shaded strip that of the Mill Ditch. Caxton's lodging is indicated by asterisks.

PLAN OF WESTMINSTER, SHOWING LOCATION OF CAXTON'S PRESS
(From H. F. Westlake's *Westminster*)

[*Face p.* 208

APPENDICES



CAXTON'S IMPRINT

BOOKS ABOUT CAXTON

1735. Conyers Middleton: *Diss. concerning the Origin of Printing in England.*
1737. John Lewis: *Life of William Caxton.*
1748. Oldys (in *Biographia Britannica*).
1749. Ames: *Typographical Antiquities.*
1785. Herbert: (revision of Ames: *T.A.*).
1810. Dibdin: (revision of Ames-Herbert: *T.A.*).
1844. Le Roux de Lincy: *La Vie et les Ouvrages de William Caxton.*
1844. Charles Knight: *William Caxton.*
1861–63. William Blades: *Life and Typography of William Caxton.*
1865. William Blades: *How to Tell a Caxton.*
1877. William Blades: *Biography and Typography of William Caxton.*
1882. William Blades: *Biography and Typography of William Caxton.* (Ed. 2.)
1877. Charles Knight: *William Caxton.* (Ed. 2.)
1877. R. H. Blades: *Who Was Caxton?*
1877. G. Bullen: *Caxton Celebration Catalogue.* William Blades made (for the British Museum) a special edition of this, containing all the correspondence, photographs, and press notices concerning the Caxton celebration and exhibition of early printing.
1878. A. N. Butt: *William Caxton, etc.*
1879. Beedham (John Springer): *Caxton Reproductions.*
1880. T. C. Noble: *A Caxton Memorial.*
1891. Hermann Römstedt: *Die engl. Schriftsprache bei Caxton.*
1894. C. S. Baldwin: *Inflections and Syntax of the Morte d'Arthur.*
1901. P. de Reul: *Language of Caxton's Reynard the Foxe.*
1905. E. G. Duff: *William Caxton.*
1909. G. P. Winship: *William Caxton.*
1909. S. de Ricci: *A Census of Caxtons.*
1917. Susan Cunnington: *The Story of William Caxton.*
1925. H. R. Plomer: *William Caxton.*

CAXTON'S BOOKS IN CHRONOLOGICAL SEQUENCE

(This list follows the arrangement of E. Gordon Duff. Brackets signify volumes with no printed date.)

AT BRUGES.

[1475]. The Recuyell of the Historyes of Troye.
[1475]. The Game and Playe of the Chesse.
[1476]. Les Quatre Derrenières Choses.

AT WESTMINSTER.

1477. Dictes or Sayengis of the Philosophres.
[1477]. Advertisement of Sarum Pica.
Book of Courtesy.
Cato, Parvus et Magnus. (2 editions.)
Queen Anelida and the False Arcyte.
The Temple of Brass.
Infancia Salvatoris.
The History of Jason.
The Churl and the Bird. (2 editions.)
The Horse, the Sheep, and the Goose. (2 editions.)
Stans Puer ad Mensam.
The Temple of Glass.
Ordinale Secundum usum Sarum.
1478. Moral Proverbs of Cristyne.
[1478]. Boëthius de Consolatione Philosophiæ.
The Canterbury Tales.
Horæ ad Usum Sarum.
Propositio Johannis Russell.
1479. Cordyale.
1479. Dictes or Sayengis. (Ed. 2.)
Nova Rhetorica (Margarita Eloquentiæ).
1480. Chronicles of England.
Description of Britain.
Indulgence of John Kendale. (Singular issue, no year of pontificate.)
Indulgence of John Kendale. (Plural issue, no year of pontificate.)

[1480]. Festum Visitationis Beate Mariæ Virginis.
Horæ ad Usum Sarum.
Court of Sapience.
Psalterium.
French-English Vocabulary.
1481. Tully of Old Age and Friendship.
Godfrey of Boloyne.
Indulgence of J. de Gigliis. (Singular issue, with year of pontificate.)
Indulgence of J. de Gigliis. (Plural issue, with year of pontificate.)
Reynard the Fox.
[1481]. Cato, Parvus et Magnus. (Ed. 3.)
The Mirrour of the World.
1482. Chronicles of England. (Ed. 2.)
Polycronicon.
1483. Confessio Amantis.
The Pilgrimage of the Soul.
Mirk's Festial.
The Golden Legend.
[1483]. The Boke Callid Cathon.
The Game and Playe of the Chesse. (Ed. 2.)
The Book of Fame.
Troilus and Creside.
Death-bed Prayers.
Quattuor Sermones.
Sex Epistolæ.
1484. Æsop.
The Knight of the Tower.
[1484]. The Curial.
The Canterbury Tales. (Ed. 2.)
The Life of Our Lady. (2 editions.)
The Order of Chivalry.
1485. The Life of Charles the Great.
The Morte d'Arthur.
Paris and Vienne.
[1485]. The Life of Saint Winifred.
[1486]. Speculum Vitæ Christi.
[1487]. The Book of Good Manners.
[1487]. Commemoratio Lamentationis B.V. Mariæ.
Donatus Melior.
Image of Pity.
Directorium Sacerdotum.

[1488].	Royal Book.
	The Golden Legend. (Ed. 2.)
1489.	Fayts of Arme.
	The Doctrinal of Sapience.
	Indulgence of J. de Gigliis.
[1489].	Blanchardyn and Eglantine.
	Dictes or Sayengis. (Ed. 3.)
	The Four Sons of Aymon.
	The Governal of Helthe.
	Directorium Sacerdotum.
	Reynard the Fox. (Ed. 2.)
	Statutes of Henry VII.
[1490].	The Art and Craft to Know Well to Die.
	Eneydos.
[1490].	Speculum Vitæ Christi. (Ed. 2.)
	Horæ ad Usum Sarum. (2 issues.)
	Image of Pity.
	The Mirrour of the World. (Ed. 2.)
[1491].	Ars Moriendi.
	A Book of Divers Ghostly Matters.
	Festum Transfigurationie Jesu Christi.
	The Fifteen Oes.
	Mirk's Festial. (Ed. 2.)
	Quattuor Sermones. (Ed. 2.)

EDITIONS AND REPRINTS

The Recuyell of the Historyes of Troye.

1472–4. Caxton.
1503. Wynkyn de Worde.
1553. William Copland.
1607. Thomas Creede.
1617. Bernard Alsop.
1636. B. Alsop and T. Fawcet.
1663. R.I. for S.S.
1670. T. Passinger.
1676. T. Passinger.
1680. T. Passinger.
1684. T. Passinger.
1702. Eben. Tracey.
1708. Eben. Tracey.
1738. Thomas Browne.
1892. William Morris.
1894. H. Oskar Sommer.

Jason.

1477. Caxton.
(William Morris planned a reprint, but did not live to publish it. His typewritten transcript was turned over for the use of the Early English Text Society.)
1492. Gerard Leeu.
1913. Early English Text Society. Extra Series.

Eneydos.

1490. Caxton.
1890. Early English Text Society. Extra Series.

Ovyde, His Booke of Methamorphose.

1819. George Hibbert for Roxburghe Club.
1924. Stephen Gaselee
H. F. B. Brett-Smith Shakespeare Head Press.

DICTES OR SAYENGIS OF THE PHILOSOPHRES.

1477. Caxton. (2 editions.)
1479. Caxton.
1489. Caxton.
1528. Wynkyn de Worde.
1877. William Blades (facsimile of Caxton).

PARVUS CATHO—MAGNUS CATHO.

1477. Caxton.
1477. Caxton.
1481. Caxton.
1558. William Copland. (Parvus follows Magnus.)
1906. Cambridge University Press (facsimile 1st ed.).

TULLY : OLD AGE AND FRIENDSHIP ; NOBLESSE.

1481. Caxton.
1530. William Rastell (the *Amicicia* only).

THE GAME AND PLAYE OF THE CHESSE.

1475. Caxton.
1483. Caxton.
1855. Vincent Figgins (facsimile), J. R. Smith. (Caxton 2nd ed. woodcuts.)
1857. Isaac Pitman (reprint in phonetic spelling).
1860. Vincent Figgins (facsimile), J. R. Smith.
1862. Trübner and Co.
1872 (1879). Isaac Pitman (reprint in phonetic spelling, 2nd ed.).
1883. W. E. A. Axon. (Reprint ; text of 1st ed., woodcuts of 2nd.)

THE MORALE PROVERBES OF CRISTYNE.

1478. Caxton.
1526. Richard Pynson (in vol. of Chaucer's Works).
1859. William Blades (95 copies for presentation only).

THE BOOK OF CURTYSE (Lytyll John).

1479. Caxton.
1491. Caxton.
Undated (1492 ?). Wynkyn de Worde.
1868. Early English Text Society. Extra Series.
1907. Jenkinson reprint (facsimile), Cambridge.

STANS PUER AD MENSAM.

Before 1479. Caxton.
1515. Wynkyn de Worde.
1516. Wynkyn de Worde.
1524. Wynkyn de Worde.
Undated. Wynkyn de Worde.
1868. Early English Text Society. Extra Series.

THE KNIGHT OF THE TOWER.

1484. Caxton.
1868. Early English Text Society. Extra Series. (Part only from Caxton's edition.)
1902. Gertrude Rawlings (slightly over half).
1906. Early English Text Society. Revised edition.

ROYAL BOOK.

1488 (?). Caxton.
1507. Pynson.
1507. Wynkyn de Worde.
Undated. Wynkyn de Worde.

THE CURIAL.

1484 (?). Caxton.
1888. Early English Text Society. Extra Series.

BOOK OF GOOD MANNERS.

1487. Caxton.
1494. Richard Pynson.
1507. Wynkyn de Worde.
Undated. Wynkyn de Worde.

PILGRIMAGE OF THE SOUL.

1483. Caxton.
1859. Katherine Isabella Cust (reprint of something more than half).

COURT OF SAPIENCE.

1481 (?). Caxton.
1510. Wynkyn de Worde.

ARS MORIENDI.

1490. Caxton.
1491. Caxton.
(Later edition by Wynkyn de Worde is another and complete version by Andrew Chertsey.)
1917. Modernized and abridged by F. M. Comper.

THE FIFTEEN OES.

1490. Caxton.
1869. William Caxton—reproduced in facsimile.

MIRROUR OF THE LIFE OF CHRIST.

1486. Caxton.
1490. Caxton.
1495. Pynson.
1517. Wynkyn de Worde.
1523. Wynkyn de Worde.
1600. (Without place or date—about fifty curious little cuts.)
1908. Roxburghe Club.
1908. L. F. Powell, Clarendon Press, Oxford.

GOLDEN LEGEND.

1483. Caxton.
1488. Caxton.
1493. Wynkyn de Worde (an abbreviated edition).
1498. Wynkyn de Worde.
1503. Julian Notary.

1512. Wynkyn de Worde.
1527. Wynkyn de Worde.
1878. Holbein Society.
1898. H. D. Madge: *Leaves from the Golden Legend* (selections).
1900. Temple Classics. F. S. Ellis, editor (7 vols.).
William Morris. F. S. Ellis, editor (3 vols.).
1914. Cambridge University Press. G. V. O'Neill, ed. (an abbreviated selection of lives).

MIRK'S FESTIAL.

1483. Caxton.
1491. Caxton.
1493. Wynkyn de Worde.
1496. Wynkyn de Worde.
1499. Wynkyn de Worde.
1499. Richard Pynson.
1502. Richard Pynson.
1508. Wynkyn de Worde.
1528. Wynkyn de Worde.
1532. Wynkyn de Worde.
1905. Early English Text Society. Extra Series.

MIRROUR OF THE WORLD.

1481. Caxton.
1490. Caxton.
1527. Laurence Andrewe.
1913. Early English Text Society. Extra Series.

GOUVERNAYLE OF HELTHE.

1489. Caxton.
1858. William Blades (facsimile).

FRENCH-ENGLISH VOCABULARY.

1480. Caxton.
1900. Early English Text Society. Extra Series.

SEX EPISTOLÆ.

1483. Caxton.
1892. Jas. Hyatt. (Int. and trans. Geo. Bullen.)

CHRONICLES OF ENGLAND.

1480. Caxton.
1482. Caxton.
1483. Schoolmaster of St. Albans.
1485. Machlinea.
1493. Gerard Leew (Antwerp).
1497. Wynkyn de Worde.
1502. Wynkyn de Worde.
1504. Julian Notary.
1510. Richard Pynson.
1515. Wynkyn de Worde.
1515. Julian Notary.
1520. Wynkyn de Worde.
1528. Wynkyn de Worde.
1906–8. Early English Text Society. Extra Series. (Caxton's text used only in part.)

POLYCHRONICON.

1482. Caxton.
1495. Wynkyn de Worde.
1527. Peter Treveris.
1858. Rolls Series, C. Babington and J. R. Lumley.

DESCRIPTION OF BRITAIN.

1482. Caxton. (Reprints were issued in 1497, 1502, 1510, 1515, and 1528.)

REYNARD THE FOX.

1481. Caxton.
1489. Caxton.
1500 (?). Pynson.
1550. Thomas Gualtier.
1629. Elizabeth Alde.
1638 (?)
1656. J. Bell.
1667. J. Bell.
1681. J. Bell (with continuation).
1684. J. Bell (a third part added).

1694. Thos. James for Edw. Brewster.
1701. (Follows Brewster edition.)
1844. Ed. W. J. Thoms, reprint of Caxton for Percy Society.
1878. Arber reprint of Caxton.
Routledge, Broadway Trans. (Caxton modernized).
1892. William Morris, Caxton reprint.
1894. F. S. Ellis, Verse based on Caxton's prose.
1903. Heinemann, "Every Child's Library." (Adaptation of Caxton. Many paraphrases and retellings not noted.)

ÆSOP.

1484. Caxton.
1500. R. Pynson.
1570. H. Wykes for J. Waley.
1585. E. Bollifant (phonetically transcribed by W. Bullokar).
1634. A. Hebb.
1647. A. Hebb.
1658. A. Roper.
1889. David Nutt (J. Jacobs: *History of the Æsopic Fable*, 2 vols.).

GODEFREY OF BOLOYNE.

1481. Caxton.
1893. Early English Text Society. Extra Series.
1893. William Morris.

CHARLES THE GRETE.

1485. Caxton.
1879. Early English Text Society. Extra Series.

PARIS AND VIENNE.

1485. Caxton.
1492. Gerard Leeu.
1510 (?). Wynkyn de Worde.
1621. B. Alsop.
(?) For R. Hawkins.
(?) For G. Percivall.
1650. For W. Leake.
1868. Roxburghe Library (ed. W. C. Hazlitt.)

BLANCHARDYN AND EGLANTINE.

1489. Caxton.
1890. Early English Text Society. Extra Series.

THE FOUR SONS OF AYMON.

1489. Caxton.
1504. Wynkyn de Worde.
1554. William Copland.
1884. Early English Text Society. Extra Series.
1897. Robert Steele (retold from Caxton under title Renaud of Montauban).

THE ORDER OF CHIVALRY.

1484. Caxton.
1892. Willim Morris (ed. F. S. Ellis).

LE MORTE DARTHUR.

1485. Caxton.
1498. Wynkyn de Worde.
1529. Wynkyn de Worde.
1557. William Copland.
1585 (?). Thos. East. (2 editions.)
1634. Wm. Stansby, for Jacob Bloome.
1816. London, 2 vols.
1816. London, 3 vols.
1817. Southey.
1856. Thos. Wright.
1868. Globe edition (modernized and abridged by Sir E. Strachey).
1889–91. H. O. Sommer, 3 vols.
1893. T. Wright.
1893–94. J. M. Dent (Int. Rhys and designs A. Beardsley), 2 vols.
1896. Temple Classics (Sir I. Gollancz), 4 vols.
1900. Library of English Classics (A. W. Pollard), 2 vols.
1906. Everyman's Library (Int. Rhys), 2 vols.
1909. J. M. Dent (2nd ed.).
1909. Riccardi Press (ill. W. R. Flint).
1913. Ashendene Press, Chelsea (ill. C. M. and Marg. Gere).
1924. Rand McNally (ed. and arranged by P. S. Allen). (Many editions of selections and re-tellings.)

CAXTON'S PROLOGUES, EPILOGUES, AND INTERPOLATIONS

THE RECUYELL OF THE HISTORYES OF TROYE

Here begynneth the volume intituled and named the recuyell of the historyes of Troye/composed and drawen out of dyuerce bookes of latyn in to frensshe by the ryght venerable persone and worshipfull man. Raoul le ffeure. preest and chapelayn vnto the ryght noble gloryous and myghty prynce in his tyme Phelip duc of Bourgoyne of Braband &c In the yere of the Incarnacion of our lord god a thousand foure honderd sixty and foure/And translated and drawen out of frenshe into englisshe by Willyam Caxton mercer of y^{e} cyte of London at the comaũdemet of the ryght hye myghty and vertuouse Pryncesse hys redoubtyd lady. Margarete by the grace of god. Duchesse of Bourgoyne of Lotryk of Braband &c/Whiche sayd translacion and werke was begonne in Brugis in the Countee of Flaundres the fyrst day of marche the yere of the Incarnacion of our said lord god a thousand foure honderd sixty and eyghte/And ended and fynysshid in the holy cyte of Colen the .xix. day of septembre the yere of our sayd lord god a thousand foure honderd sixty and enleuen &c.

And on that other side of this leef foloweth the prologe.

Whan I remembre that euery man is bounden by the comandement & counceyll of the wyse man to eschewe slouthe and ydlenes whyche is moder and nourysshar of vyces and ought to put my self vnto vertuous occupacion and besynesse/Than I hauynge no grete charge of occupacion folowynge the sayd counceyll/toke a frenche booke and redde therin many strange and meruayllous historyes wherin I had grete pleasyr and delyte/as well for the nouelte of the same as for the fayr langage of frenshe. whyche was in prose so well and compendiously sette and wreton/whiche me thought I vnderstood the sentence and substance of euery mater/And for so moche as this booke was newe and late maad and drawen in to frenshe/ and neuer had seen hit in oure englissh tongue/I thought in my self hit shold be a good besynes to translate hyt in to oure englissh/to thende that hyt myght be had as well in the royame of Englond as in other londes/and also for to passe therwyth the tyme. and thus concluded in my self to begynne this sayd werke/And forthwith toke penne and ynke and began boldly to renne forth as blynde bayard in thys presente werke whyche is named the recuyell of the troian historyes And afterward whan I remembryd my self of my symplenes and vnperfightnes that I had in bothe langages/that is to wete in frenshe & in englissh for in france was I neuer/and was born & lerned myn englissh in kente in the weeld where I doubte not is spoken as brode and rude englissh as in ony place of englond & haue contynued by the space of .XXX. yere for the most parte in the contres of Braband, flandres holand and zeland and thus when alle thyse thynges cam tofore me aftyr that y had made and wretyn a fyve or six quayers. y fyll in dispayr of thys werke and purposid nomore to haue contynuyd therin and tho quayers leyd a part and in two yere aftyr laboured nomore in thys werke And was fully in wyll to haue lefte hyt. tyll on a tyme hit fortuned that the ryght hyghe excellent and right vertuous prynces my ryght redoughted lady mylady Margarete by the grace of god suster vnto y^e^ kynge of englond and of frãce, my souerayn lord Duchesse of Bourgoine of lotryk. of brabant. of lymburgh. and of luxenburgh Countes of fflãders of artoys & of bourgoine Palatynee of heynawd of holand of zelãd and of namur Marquesse of y^e^ holy empire. lady of ffryse of salius and of mechlyn sente for me to speke wyth her good grace of dyuerce maters among y^e^ whyche y ete her hyenes haue knowleche of y^e^ forsayd begynnyng of thys werke which anone comanded me to shewe the sayd .v. or .vi. quayers to her sayd grace and whan she had seen hem. anone she fonde a defaute in myn englissh whiche sche comãded me to amende ãd more ouer comanded me straytli to contynue and make an ende of the resydue than not translated. whos dredefull comãdement y durste in no wyse disobey because y am a seruãt unto her sayde grace and resseiue of her yerly ffee and other many goode and grete benefetes. and also hope many moo to resseyue of her hyenes but forth wyth wente and labouryde in the sayde translacion aftyr my symple and pour connyng also nigh as y can folouyng myn auctour mekeli beseching the bounteuous hyenes of my said lady that of her benyuolence liste to accepte & take in gree this symple & rude werke here folowyng. and yf ther be ony thing wreton or sayd to her playsir. y shall thynke my labour well employed and where as ther is defawte. y^{t} she arette hyt to y^{e} symplenes of my connying whiche is ful small in this behalue and requyre & praye alle them that shall rede this sayd werke to correcte hyt & to hold me excusid of the rude and symple translacion And thus y ende my prologe. . .

(At close of Book II.)

Besechyng her that is cause of this translacõn out of frenshe in to this symple and rude englissh / that is to wete my right redoubtyd lady Margrete by the grace of god suster of my souerayn lord the kynge of englond and of ffrance &c Duchesse of bourgoyne and of Brabant &c that she wole resseyue my Rude labour in thanke and in gree :.

Thus endeth the seconde book of the recule of the historyes of Troyes / Whiche bookes were late translated into frenshe out of latyn / by the labour of the venerable persone raoul le feure preest as afore is said / And by me Indigne and vnworthy translated into this rude englissh / by the comandement of my said redoubtid lady duches of Bourgone : And for as moche as I suppose the said two bokes ben not had to fore this tyme in oure englissh langage / therfore I had the better will to accomplisshe this said werke / whiche werke was begonne in Brugis / & contynued in gaunt And finysshid in Coleyn In the tyme of y^{e} troublous world / and of the grete deuysions beyng and reygnyng as well in the royames of englond and fraunce as in all other places vnyuersally thurgh the world that is to wete the yere of our lord a thousand four honderd lxxi. And as for the thirde book whiche treteth of the generall and last destruccõn of Troye Hit nedeth not to translate hit in to englissh / ffor as moche as that worshifull & religyo^{9} man dan Iohn lidgate monke of Burye dide translate hit but late / after whos werke I fere to take vpon me that am not worthy to bere his penner & ynke horne after hym. to medle me in that werke. But yet for as moche as I am bounde to contemplare my sayd ladyes good grace and also that his werke is in ryme / And as ferre as I know hit is not had in prose in our tonge / And also paraventure / he translated after some other Auctor than this is/And yet for as moche as dyuerce men ben of dyuerce desyres. Some to rede in Ryme and metre. and some in prose And also be cause that I haue now good leyzer beyng in Coleyn And haue none other thynge to doo at this tyme In eschewyng of ydlenes moder of all vices. I haue delibered in my self for the contemplacion of my sayd redoubtid lady to take this laboure in hand by y^e^ suffrance and helpe of almyghty god. whome I mekely supplye to gyue me grace to accomplysshe hit to the playsir of her that is causer thereof and that she resseyue hit in gre of me her faithfull trewe & moste humble servant &c.

Thus endeth the seconde book.

(CLOSE OF THIRD.)

Thus ende I this book whyche I haue translated after myn Auctor as nyghe as god hath gyuen me connyng to whom be gyuen the laude & preysyng/And for as moche as in the wrytyng of the same my penne is worn/myn hande wery & not stedfast myn eyen dĩmed with ouermoche lokyng on the whit paper/and my corage not so prone and redy to laboure as hit hath ben/and that age crepeth on me dayly and febleth all the bodye/and also be cause I haue promysid to dyuerce gentilmen and to my frendes to addresse to hem as hastely as I myght this sayd book/Therefore I haue practysed & lerned at my grete charge and dispense to ordeyne this said book in prynte after the maner & forme as ye may here see/and is not wreton with penne and ynke as other bookes ben/to thende that euery man may haue them attones/ffor all the bookes of this storye named the recule of the historyes of troyes thus enpryntid as ye here see were begonne in oon day/and also fynysshid in oon day/whiche book I haue presented to my sayd redoubtid lady as a fore is sayd. And she hath well accptid hit/and largely rewarded me/wherfore I beseche almyghty god to rewarde her euerlastyng blisse after this lyf. Prayng her said grace and all them that shall rede this book not to desdaigne the symple and rude werke. nether to replye agaynst the sayyng of the maters towchyd in this book/thauwh hyt acorde not vnto the translacõn of other whiche haue wreton hit/ffor dyuerce man haue made dyuerce bookes/whiche in all poyntes acorde not as Dictes. Dares. and Homerus ffor dictes & homerus as grekes sayn and wryten fauorably for the grekes/and gyue to them more worship than to the troians/And Dares wryteth otherwyse than they doo/ And also as for the propre names/hit is no wonder that they acorde not/ffor sõme oon name in thyse dayes haue dyuerce equyuocacions after the contrees that they dwelle in/but alle acorde in conclusion the generall destruccion of that noble cyte of Troye/And the deth of so many noble prynces as kynges dukes Erles barons. knyghtes and comyn peple and the ruyne irreperable of that Cyte that neuer syn was reedefyed whiche may be ensample to all men duryng the world how dredefull and Ieopardous it is to begynne a warre and what hormes. losses. and deth foloweth. Terfore thapostle saith all that is wreton is wreton to our doctryne/whyche doctryne for the comyn wele I beseche god maye be taken in suche place and tyme as shall be moste nedefull in encrecyng of peas loue and charyte whyche graunte us he that suffryd for the same to be crucyfied on the rood tree/And saye we alle Amen for charyte. .

THE GAME AND PLAYE OF THE CHESSE

(Dedication—omitted in the 2nd Edition.)

To the right noble/right excellent & vertuous prince George duc of Clarence Erle of warwyk and of salisburye/grete chamberlayn of Englond & leutenant of Irelond oldest broder of kynge Edward by the grace of god kynge of England and of fraũce/your most humble seruant william Caxton amonge other of your seruantes sendes vnto yow peas. helthe. Ioye and victorye vpon your Enemyes/Right highe puyssant and redoubted prynce/For as moche as I haue vnderstand and knowe/ that ye are inclined vnto the comyn wele of the kynge our sayd saueryn lord. his nobles lordes and comyn peple of his noble royame of Englond/and that ye sawe gladly the Inhabitans of y^e same enformed in good. vertuous. prouffitable and honeste maners. Jn whiche your noble persone wyth guydyng of your hows haboundeth gyuyng light and ensample unto all other/Therefore I haue put me in deuour to translate a lityll book late comen in to myn handes out of frensh in to englisshe/Jn which I fynde thauctorites. dictees. and stories of auncient Doctours philosophes poetes and of other wyse men whiche been recounted & applied vnto the moralite of the publique wele as well of the nobles as of the comyn peple after the game and playe of the chesse/whiche booke right puyssant and redoubtid lord I haue made in the name and vnder the shadewe of your noble protection/not presumyng to correcte or enpoigne ony thynge ayenst your noblesse/For god be thankyd your excellent renome shyneth as well in strange regions as within the royame of england gloriously unto your honour and laude/which god multeplye and encrece But to thentent that other of what estate or degre he or they stande in. may see in this sayd lityll book/yf they gouerned themself as they ought to doo/wherfor my right dere redoubted lord I requyre & supplye your good grace not to desdaygne to resseyue this lityll sayd book in gree and thanke/as well of me your humble and vnknowen seruant as of a better and gretter man than I am/For the right good wylle that I haue had to make this lityll werk in the best wyse I can/ought to be reputed for the fayte and dede/And for more clerely to procede in this sayd book I haue ordeyned that the chapitres ben sette in the begynnynge to thende that ye may see more playnly the mater wherof the book treteth &c.

PREFACE TO 2ND EDITION.

The holy appostle and doctour of the peple saynte Poule sayth in his epistle. Alle that is wryten is wryten vnto our doctryne and for our lernyng. Wherfore many noble clerkes haue endeuoyred them to wryte and compyle many notable werkes and historyes to the ende that it myght come to the knowlege and vnderstondyng of suche as ben ygnoraunt. Of which the nombre is infenyte/And accordyng to the same saith Salamon. that the nombre of foles. is infenyte/And emong alle other good werkes. It is a werke of ryght special recommendacion to enforme. and to late vnderstonde wysedom and vertue vnto them that be not lernyd ne can not dyscerne wysedom fro folye. Thēne emonge whom there was an excellent doctour of dyuynyte in the royame of fraunce of ordre of thospytal of Saynt Johns of Jherusalem which entended the same and hath made a book of the chesse moralysed. which at suche tyme as I was resident in brudges in the counte of Flaundres cam in to my handes/which whan I had redde and ouerseen/me semed ful necessarye for to be had in englisshe/And in eschewyng of ydlenes And to thende that sõme which haue not seen it/ne vnderstonde frensh ne latyn. J delybered in my self to translate it in to our maternal tonge/And when I so had achyeued the sayd translacion/J dyde doo sette in enprynte a certeyn nombre of theym/ Whiche anone were depesshed and solde. wherfore by cause thys sayd book is ful of holsom wysedom and requysyte vnto euery astate and degree/J haue purposed to enprynte it/ shewyng therin the figures of suche persons as longen to the playe. Jn whom al astates and degrees ben comprysed/ besechyng al them that this litel werke shal see/here/or rede to haue for me excused for the rude & symple makyng and reducyn in to our englisshe/And where as is defaute to correcte and amende/and in so doyng they shal deserue meryte and thanke/and I shal pray for them/that god of his grete mercy shal rewarde them in his euerlastyng blisse in heuen/to the whiche he brynge vs/that wyth his precious blood redemed vs Amen.

Book III, Ch. 3 (Doubtless added by Caxton, since not found in any Latin or French manuscript).

Alas and in Engeland what hurte doon the aduocats. men of lawe/And attorneyes of court to the comyn peple of y^e royame as well in the spirituell lawe as in the temporall/how torne they the lawe and statutes at their pleasir/how ete they the peple/how enpouere they the comynte/I suppose that in alle Christendom ar not so many pledars attorneys and men of the lawe as ben in Englond onely/for yf they were nombrid all that lange to the courtes of the chauncery kinges benche. comyn place. cheker. ressayt and helle And the bagge berars of the same/hit shold amounte to a grete multitude And how alle thyse lyue & of whome yf hit shold be vttrid & told/hit shold not be byleuyd. For they entende to theyr synguler wele and prouffyt and not to the comyn/

In Book IV, Ch. 2, he inserts:

Alas what haboundance was some tymes in the royames. And what prospite/In whiche was Iustice/and euery man in his office contente/how stood the cytees of that tyme in worship and renome/how was renomed the noble royame of

Englond. Alle the world dredde hit And spack worship of hit/ how hit now standeth and in what haboundance I reporte me to them that knowe hit yf ther ben theeuis wyth in the royame or on the see/they knowe that laboure in the royame And sayle on the see J wote well the fame is grete therof I praye god saue that noble royame And sende good true and politicque counceyllours to the gouernours of the same &c/

EPILOGUE TO 1ST EDITION.

And therfore my ryght redoubted lord I pray almighty god to saue the kyng our souerain lord & to gyue him grace to yssue as a kynge & tabounde in all vertues/& to be assisted with all other his lordes in such wyse y^t his noble royame of Englond may prospere & habounde in vertues/and y^t synne may be eschewid iustice kepte/the royame defended good men rewarded malefactours punysshid & the ydle peple to be put to laboure that he wyth the nobles of the royame may regne gloriously In conquerynge his rightfull inheritaunce/ that verray peas and charite may endure in bothe his royames/ and that marchandise may haue his cours in suche wise that euery man eschewe synne/and encrece in vertuous occupacions/Praynge your good grace to resseyue this lityll and symple book made vnder the hope and shadowe of your noble protection by hym that is your most humble seruant/in gree and thanke And I shall pray almighty god for your longe lyf & welfare/whiche he perserue And sende you thaccomplisshement of your hye noble. Joyous and vertuous desirs Amen :/: Fynysshid the last day of marche the yer of our lord God .a. thousand foure hondred and lxxiiii ∴. : : : .

EPILOGUE TO THE 2ND EDITION.

Thenne late euery man of what condycion he be that redyth or herith this litel book redde/take therby ensaumple to amende hym.

Explicit per Caxton.

JASON

For as moche as late by the comaũdement of the right hye & noble princesse my right redoubted lady/My lady Margerete by the grace of God Duchesse of Bourgoyne Brabant &c. I translated a boke out of frensshe in to Englissh named Recuyel of the histories of Troye in which is comprehended how Troye was thries destroyed And also the labours & histories of Saturnus Tytan/Jubyter Perseus and Hercules/& other moo therein Rehersed. but as to the historie of Iason/towching the conqueste of the Golden flese/myn auctor hath not sett in his boke. but breuely and the cause is for asmoche as he hadde made before a boke of the hoole lyf of Iason. whyche he presented vnto the noble Prynce in his dayes Philippe Duc of Bourgoyne/And also the sayde boke shulde haue ben to grete. if he had sett the saide historie in his boke. for it conteyneth thre bokes beside thistorie of Jason. Theñe for as moche as this sayd boke is late newe made aparte of alle thistories of the sayd Jason & the historie of him whiche that Dares Frigius & Guido de columpnys wrote in the begynnyng of their bokes/touchyng the conqueste of the sayd golden flese. by occasion wherof grewe the cause of the seconde destruccion of the sayd cite of Troye. is not sett in the sayd boke of Recuyel of thistories of Troye/Therfor vnder the proteccion & suffraunce of the most hyghe puissant & xp̃en kyng. my most dradde naturel liege Lord Edward by the grace of god kyng of englond and of Fraunce and lord of Jrland/I entende to translate the sayd boke of thistories of Iason. folowyng myn auctor as nygh as I can or may not chaungyng the sentence. ne presumyng to adde ne mynusshe ony thing otherwyse than myne auctor hath made in Frensshe/And in somoche as the grettest fame & renomme standeth & resteth in the conquest of the flese of gold/where of is founded an ordre of knightes. wherof oure sayd souerayne lord is one & hath taken the profession therof/howe well som̃e persones afferme and saye that the sayd ordre hath taken his orygynal of the flese of Gedeon. where in I will not dispute. But well wote I that the noble Duc Philippe firste foundeur of this sayd ordre/dyd doo maken a chambre in the Castell of Hesdyn/where in was craftyly and curiously depeynted the conqueste of the golden flese by the sayd Iason/in whiche chambre I haue ben and seen the sayde historie so depeynted. & in remẽbrañce of medea & of her connyng & science. he had do make in the sayde chambre by subtil engyn that when he wolde it shuld seme that it lightend & then thondre/snowe & rayne. And all within the sayde chambre as ofte tymes & whan it shuld please him. which was all made for his singuler pleasir. Theñe for the honour & worship of our sayd moost redoubted liege lorde whiche hath taken the sayde ordre/I haue vnder the shadowe of his noble p̃teccion enterprised taccomplish this sayd litil boke. not p̃'sumyng to p̃sente it vnto his highnesse. for asmoch as I doubte not his good grace hath it in frensh/which he wel vnderstandeth. but not displesing his most noble grace I entende by his licence & congye & by the supportacõn of our most redoubted liege lady/most excellent princesse the Quene to presente this sayde boke unto the most fayr. and my moost redoubted yong lorde. My lord Prynce of Wales. our tocomyng souerayne lorde. whom I praye god saue and encrease in vertue & bryng him vnto as moche worship and goode Renom̃e as euer had ony of his noble progenytours To thentente/he may begynne to lerne rede Englissh. not for ony beaute or good Endyting of our englissh tonge that is therin. but for the nouelte of the histories whiche as I suppose hath not be had bifore the translacion herof Moost humblie besekyng my sayd most drad souerayn & naturel liege lorde the kyng and also the Quene to p̃don me so presumyng. And my sayd tocomyng souerayne lord/My lord the Prynce to receyue it in gree & thanke of me his humble subgiett & seruaũte. and to pardone me of this my simple and Rude translacion/and all other that luste to rede or here it/to correcte where as they shalle finde defaulte

Here endeth the prologue of the translatour

JASON

Epilogue.

And howe be it that myn auctor writeth that he hath foũde nomore of thistorie of Iason/yet haue I foũden & red in the boke that bochace made of the genalagie of goddes in his

.xiij. boke that whan so was that Iason & medea were reconciled agayn to geder after that shee fled from egeon he went with her into colchos again & whan he was comen theder—he foũde the olde king oetes fader vnto medea banissed & exiled out of his royame/whom he restored & sette him by his valiañce & puissaũte in his kingdom agayn/& after went into asie where he had victorie in many batailes And made so many conquestes with grete magnificence in somoche that he was honoured & worshipped for a god/& were made & edefied diũce temples in his name which after were destroied by the cõmandement of king Alexander of macedone/who pauenture had enuye of his glorie & also he saith that thoant & eune⁹ where his sones whom he begate on ysiphile as he went to colchos where as Statius saith Whiche were borñ at ones. And for asmoch as it was not the custome in lenos to fede & norisshe the men children they were sent into another coñtrey for to be nourysshed wherfore the moder was put out of her Royaume. & taken with pirates & theues. & after sold vnto Lygurgis king of nemee. and after whan the sayde sones waxe men they went with king Adrast⁹ vnto the bataile of Thebes/& as they went in the wode of nemee they herde of the sayd king Adrast⁹ reherse her burth & the caas of her moder/by which rehersayll they knew that she was their moder/& in king Lygurgis court they fonde her/whenne Opheltes his sone was foũde dede in the gardyn/what time the lady that hadde charge of him went with the grekes to shew him the water as in the siege of thebes it is more plainly shewd/but what cam afterward of these two sones it is incertayn this saith bochace in the .xiij. boke of the geneolagye of goddes. And he saith he had an other sone whos name was philelemus/and more haue I not red of this noble Iason/but this haue I foũden more theñ myn auctor reherceth in his boke/& therfore I make here an ende of this storie of Iason. whom diũce meñ blame because he left & repudied Medea/but in this present boke ye may see the euydent causes/why he so dyd. Prayng my said lorde Prince taccepte & take yt in gree of me his indigne seruiteur. whom I beseche god almighty to saue & encrece in vertu now in his tendre iongth that he may come vnto his parfait eage to his honour and worship that his Renom̃e maye be remembrid among the most worthy. And after this present life euerlasting life in heuen who grant him & vs that boughte vs with his bloode blessyd Ihus Amen

DICTES AND SAYENGIS OF THE PHILOSOPHRES

Caxton's Colophon.

Here endeth the book named the dictes or sayengis of the philosophres enprynted by me william Caxton at westmestre the yere of our Lord .M.CCCC.lxxvij. Whiche book is late translated out of Frenshe into englyssh. by the Noble and puissant Lord Antone Erle of Ryuyers lord of Scales & of the Jle of wyght/Defendour and directour of the siege apostolique/for our holy Fader the Pope in this Royame of Englond and Gouernour of my lord Prynce of wales And it is so that at suche tyme as he had accomplysshid this sayd werke it liked him to sende it to me in certayn quayers to ouersee/whiche forthwith I sawe & fonde therin many grete notable. and wyse sayengis of the philosophres Accordyng vnto the bookes made in frenshe whiche I had oft afore redde But certaynly I had seen none in englissh til that tyme/And so afterward I cam unto my sayd lord & told him how I had red & seen his book/And that he had don a meritory dede in the labour of the translacion therof in to our englissh tunge/wherin he had deseruid a singuler lawde & thank &c/ Thenne my sayd lord desired me to ouersee it and whereas I sholde fynde faute to correcte it/wherin I answerd vnto his lordship/that I coude not amende it/But if I sholde so presume I might apaire it/For it was right wel & connyngly made & translated in to right good and fayr englissh/Notwithstondyng he willed me to ouersee it & shewid me dyuerce thinges whiche as him semed myght be left out as diuerce lettres missiues sent from Alisander to dari^9 and aristotle & eche to other. whiche lettres were lityl appertinent vnto dictes and sayenges aforsayd/for as moche as they specifye of other maters/And also desired me that don to put the sayd booke in enprinte. And thus obeying hys request and comaundement I haue put me in deuoyr to ouersee this hys sayd book and beholden as nyghe as I coude how it accordeth wyth thorigynal beyng in Frensh. And I fynde nothyng dyscordaunt therin. Sauf onely in the dyctes and sayengys of Socrates. Wherin I fynde that my saide lord hath left out certayn and dyuerce conclusions towchyng women. Wherof I meruaylle that my sayd lord hath not wreton them. ne what hath meuyd hym so to do Ne what cause he hadde at that tyme. But I suppose that som fayr lady hath desired hym to leue it out of his booke Or ellys he was amerous on somme noble lady. for whos loue he wolde not sette yt in hys book. or ellys for the very affeccyon. loue and good wylle that he hath vnto alle ladyes and Gentylwomen. he thought that Socrates spared the sothe. And wrote of women more than trouthe. whyche I can not thinke that so trewe aman & so noble a Phylosophre as Socrates was shold wryte otherwyse than trouthe. For if he had made fawte in wryting of women. He ought not ne shold not be beleuyd in hys other dyctes and sayinges. But I apperceyue that my sayd lord knoweth veryly that suche defautes ben not had ne founden in the women born and dwellyng in these partyes ne Regyons of the world. Socrates was a Greke boren in a ferre Contre from hens. whyche contre is alle of other condycions than thys is. And men & women of other nature than they ben here in this contre For I wrote wel of what someuer condicion women ben in Grece. the women of this contre ben right good/wyse/playsant/humble/discrete/sobre/chast/obedient to their husbondis/trewe/secrete/stedfast/euer besy/& neuer ydle/Attemprat in spekyng/and vertuous in alle their werkis. or atte leste sholde be soo/For whiche causes so euydent my sayd lord as I suppose thoughte it was not of necessite to sette in his book the saiengis of his Auctor socrates touchyng women But for as moche as I had comãdmẽt of my sayd lord to correcte and amende where as I sholde fynde fawte/and other fynde I none sauf that he hath left out these dictes & saynges of the women of Grece/Therfore in accomplisshĩg his comandement for as moche as I am not in certayn wheder it was in my lordis copye or not. or ellis perauenture that the wynde had blowe ouer the leef/at the tyme of trãslacion of his booke/I purpose to wryte the same saynges of that Greke Socrates/whiche wrote of the women of grece and nothyng of them of this royame/whom I suppose he neuer knewe/For if he had I dar plainly saye that he wold haue reserued them inespeciall in his sayd dictes Alway not presumyng to putt & sette them in my sayd lordes book/but in thende aparte in the rehersayll of the werkis humbly requiryng of them that shal rede this lytyl rehersayll that yf they fynde ony faulte tarette it to Socrates and not to me whiche wryteth as here after foloweth

Lo these ben the dictes and sayengis of the phylosophre Socrates whiche he wrote in his book/And certaynly he wrote no worse than afore is rehersed And for as moche as it is accordaũt. that his dyctes and sayengis shold be had as wel as others therefore I haue settle it in thende of this booke/ And also somme persones parauenture that haue red this booke in frensshe wold haue arette a grette defaulte in me that I had not do my deuoir in visiting & ouerseeyng of my lordes book according to his desir/And somme other also happely might haue supposed that Socrates had wreton moche more ylle of women than here afore is specified/wherfore in satisfyeng of all parties & also for excuse of the saide socrates I haue sette these saide dyctes and sayengis a parte in thende of this book/ to thentẽt that yf my sayd lord or ony other persone what someuer he or she be that shal rede or here it/that If they be not wel plesyd wyth all that they wyth a penne race it out or ellys rente the leef out of the booke/Humbly requyryng and besechyng my sayd lord to take no displaysir on me so presumyng but to pardone where as he shal fynde faulte/and that it plese hym to take the labour of thenpryntyng in gre & thanke/whiche gladly haue don my dyligence in thaccomplysshyng of his desire and commandement/Jn whyche I am bounden so to do for the good reward that I haue reseyued of his sayd lordship/Whom I beseche Almyghty god tencrece and to contynue in his vertuous disposicion in this world/And after thys lyf to lyue euerlastyngly in heuen Amen

MORAL PROVERBS OF CHRISTYNE

Epilogue.

(Earl Rivers may have written the first of these; perhaps Caxton wrote both.)

Of these sayynges Cristyne was aucteuresse
Whiche in makyng hadde suche Intelligence
That therof she was mireur & maistresse
Hire werkes testifie thexperience
Jn frenssh languaige was writeñ this sentence
And thus Englished dooth hit rehers
Antoin wideuylle therl Ryuers

Go thou litil quayer/and recõmaund me
Vnto the good grace/of my special lorde
Therle Ryueris. for I haue enprinted the
At his cõmandement. folowyng eury worde
His copye/as his secretaire can recorde
At westmestre. of feuerer the .xx. daye
And of kyng Edward/ the .xiij. yere vraye

Enprinted by Caxton

In feuerer the colde season

BÖETHIUS

EPILOGUE.

Thus endeth this boke whiche is named the boke of Consolacion of philosophie whiche that boecius made for his comforte and consolacion he beyng in exile for the comyñ and publick wele hauyng grete heuynes & thoughtes and in maner of despayr/Rehercyng in the sayde boke howe Philosophie appiered to him shewyng the mutabilite of this transitorie lyfe/. and also enformyng howe fortune and happe shold bee vnderstonden/with the predestynacion and prescience of God as moche as maye and ys possible to bee knowen naturelly/as a fore ys sayd in this sayd boke/Whiche Boecius was an excellente auctour of dyuerse bookes craftely and curiously maad in prose and metre/And also had translated dyuerce bookes out of Greke into latyñ/and had ben senatour of that noble & famous cite Rome. And also his two sones Senatours for their prudence & wisedom. And for as moche as he withstode to his power the tyrañye of theodorik theñe Emperour/& wold haue defended the sayde cite & Senate from his wicked hondes/wherupon he was conuict & putte in prison/in whiche prison he made this forsaide boke of cõsolacion for his singuler cõfort. and for asmoche as the stile of it/is harde & difficile to be vnderstonde of simple ꝑsones Therfore the worshipful fader & first foũdeur & enbelissher of ornate eloquence in our englissh. I mene/Maister Geffrey Chaucer hath translated this sayd werke oute of latyn in to our vsual and moder tonge. Folowyng the latyn as neygh as is possible to be vnderstande. wherein in myne oppynyon he hath deseruid a perpetuell lawde and thanke of al this noble Royame of Englond/And in especiall of them that shall rede & vnderstande it. For in the sayd boke they may see what this transitorie & mutable worlde is And wherto euery mañ liuyng in hit/ought to entende · Thenne for as moche as this sayd boke so translated is rare & not spred ne knowen as it is digne and worthy · For the erudicion and lernyng of suche as ben Ignorañt & not knowyng of it/Atte requeste of a singuler frende & gossib of myne · I william Caxton haue done my debuoir & payne tenprynte it in fourme as is here afore made/In hopyng that it shal prouffite moche peple to the wele & helth of theire soules/& for to lerne to haue and kepe the better pacience in aduersitees/And furthermore I desire & require you that of your charite ye wold praye for the soule of the sayd worshipful mañ Geffrey Chaucer/first translatour of this sayd boke into englissh & enbelissher in making the sayd langage ornate & fayr. whiche shal endure perpetuelly. and therefore he ought eternelly to be remẽbrid of whom the body and corps lieth buried in thabbay of westmestre beside london to fore the chapele of seynte benet. by whos sepulture is wreton on a table hongyng on a pylere his Epitaphye maad by a Poete laureat · whereof the copye foloweth &c

These four lines following the epitaph may be Caxton's:

Post obitum Caxton voluit te viuere cura
Willelmi. Chaucer clare poeta tuj
Nam tua non solum compressit opuscula formis
Has quoqz sz laudes. iussit hic esse tuas

THE MIRROUR OF THE WORLD

Prologue declaryng to whom this book apperteyneth

Consideryng that wordes ben perisshyng/vayne/& forgeteful/And writynges duelle & abide permanẽt/as I rede Vox audita perit/littera scripta manet/Thise thinges haue caused that the faites and dedes of Anncyent meñ/ben sette by declaracion in fair and Aourned volumes/to thende that science and Artes lerned and founden of thinges passed myght be had in perpetuel memorye and remembraunce/ffor the hertes of nobles in eschewyng of ydlenes at suche tyme as they haue none other vertuouse ocupacōn on hāde aught texercise them in redyng/studyng/& visytyng the noble faytes and dedes of the sage and wysemen somtyme travaillyng in prouffytable vertues/of whom is happeth ofte that sōmen ben inclyned to visyte the bookes treatyng of sciences particuler/and other to rede & visyte bookes spekyng of faytes of armes/of loue/or of other meuaillous histories/And emonge alle other this p̃sent booke whiche is called the ymage or mirrour of the world/ ought to be visyted/redde/& knowen/by cause it treateth of the world and of the wondreful dyuision therof/in whiche book a man resonable/may see and vnderstande more clerer by the visytyng and seeyng of it and the figures therin/the situacōn and moeuyng of the firmament/and how the unyuersal erthe hangeth in the myddle of the same/As y^e^ chapitres here folowyng shal more clerly shewe and declare to you/whiche said book was translated out of latyn in to ffrensshe by the ordynaunce of the noble duc/Johan of Berry and Auuergne the yere of our lord.M.CC.xlv. And now at this tyme rudely translated out of ffrensshe in to Englissh by me symple ꝑsone william Caxton/at the request. desire. coste and dispense of the honourable & worshipful mā Hugh Bryce Alderman & Cytezeyn of london/entendyng to present the same vnto the vertuous noble and puissaunt lord/wylliam lord hastynges lord Chamberlayn unto the most Chrysten kynge/kynge Edward the fourthe kynge of England & of ffraunce &c and lieutenn̄t for the same of the toun of Calais and marches there whom he humbly besecheth to resseyue in gree & thanke/ whiche booke conteyneth in alle lxxvij chapitres/& xxvij figures/without whiche it may not lightly be vnderstāde/And for to declare more openly/it is ordeyned in thre parties/Of whiche the firste cōteyneth xx chapitres and viij figures/The seconde partie xxxiij chapitres/and ix figures/And the therde conteyneth xxiiij chapitres and .x. figures/whiche was engrossed and in alle poyntes ordeyned by chapitres and figures in ffrensshe in the toun of bruggis the yere of thyncarnacion of our lord .M.CCCC.lxiiij. in the moneth of Iuyn/And emprised by me ryght vnable and of lytil connyng to translate & brynge in to our maternal tongue y^e^ second day of the moneth of janyuer the yer of our said lord .M.CCCC.lxxx in thabbay of westmestre by london/humbly requyryng alle them that shal fynde faulte/to correcte and amende where as they shal ony fynde/And of suche so foũden that they repute not the blame not on me/but on my copie/whiche j am charged to folowe as nyghe as god will gyue me grace/whom j most humbly beseche to gyue me scyence · connyng and lyf taccomplysshe and wel to fynysshe it &c/

Thenne who so wylle comprise and vnderstande the substaunce of this present volume/for to lerne and knowe specially the creacion. of this world/the gretnes of the firmamẽt & lytilnes of therthe in regard to heuen/how the vij sciences were ffounden and what they bee/by whiche he may the better auaylle in knowleche alle the dayes of his lyf/Thenne late hym rede this said volume treatably. auisedly. & ordynatly that in suche thyng as he shal rede/he suffre nothyng to passe/ but that he vnderstonde it right well/And so may he knowe & vnderstonde veritably the declaracion of this said volume/ And he thenne that so wille obeye this cõmandemẽt/May by the contẽte of the same lerne grete partie of the fourme and condicion of this world^e/And how by y^e wyll of our lord it was by hym created made and accomplished/And the cause wherfor it was establisshid/wherof the debonayr lord hath don to us so grete grace/that we euer ben bounden to gyue hym lawde and worshyp/or ellys we had not ben of ony valew/ne worth ony thyng/nomore than vnreasonable beestis/ Thenne late vs praye the maker and creatour/of alle cratures god all myghty that at the begynnyng of this book it liste hym of his most bounteuous grace to departe with vs of the same that we may lerne/and that lerned to reteyne/& that reteyned so teche/that we may haue so parfyght scyence and knowleche of god/that we may gete therby the helthe of our sowles/and to be partyners of his glorye permanent and without ende in heuen Amen/

EPILOGUE.

And where it is so/that I haue presumed and emprised this fore sayd translacion in to our englissh and maternal tongue/ Jn whiche I am not wel parfyght/And yet lasse in frensshe/ yet I haue endeuourd me therin/atte request and desyre. coste and dispense of the honourable and worshipful man. Hugh Bryce Cytezeyn and Alderman of london/whiche hath sayd to me that he entendeth to presente it/vnto the puissaunt noble and vertuous lord My lorde hastynges. Chamberlayn vnto our souerayn lord the kynge/And his lieutenaunt of the toun of Calays & Marches there/Jn whiche translacion I knowleche my self symple. rude. And ygnoraũt/wherefor I humbly byseche my sayd lord Chamberlayn to perdonne me of this rude and symple translacion/how be it/I leye for myn cuse/that I haue to my power folowed my copye And as nygh as to me is possible I haue made it so playn/that euery man resonable may vnderstonde it/yf he aduysedly and ententyfly rede or here it/And yf ther be faulte in mesuryng of the firmament/Sonne/Mone/or of therthe/or in ony other meruaylles herin conteyned/I beseche you not tarrette the defaulte in me/but in hym that made my copye/whiche book I began first to trãslate the second day of Janyuer the yere of our lord .M.CCCC.lxxx. And fynysshyd the viij day of Marche the same yere/And the xxj yere of the Regne of the most Crysten kynge/kynge Edward the fourthe/vnder the Shadowe of whos noble proteccion I haue emprysed & fynysshed this sayd lytil werke and boke/Besechynge Almyghty god to be his protectour and defendour agayn alle his Enemyes/and gyue hym grace to subdue them/and inespeciall them that haue late enterprysed agayn right and reson to make warre wythin his Royamme/And also to preserue and mayntene hym in longe lyf and prosperous helthe/And after this short & transitorye lyf he brynge hym and vs in to his celestyal blysse in heuene Amen/

MIRROUR OF THE WORLD—INTERPOLATION

(St Patrick's Purgatory)

. . . . but I have spoken with dyverse men that have ben therin/And that one of them was an hye chanon of waterford whiche told me that he had ben therin. v. or. vi. tymes/And he sawe ne suffred no suche thynges/he saith that with procession the Relygious men that ben there brynge hym in to the hool and shette the dore after hym/and than he walketh groping in to it/where as he said ben places and maner of cowches to reste on/And there he was alle the nyght in contemplacion & prayer/and also slepte there/and on the morn he cam out agayn/other while in their slepe somme men have mervayllous dremes & other thyng sawe he not/ And in lyke wyse tolde to me a worshipful knyght of bruggis named sir John de banste that he had ben therin in lyke wyse and see none other thyng but as afore is sayd

REYNARD THE FOX

Hyer begynneth thystorye of reynard the foxe

In this historye ben wreton the parables/goode lerynge/and dyuerse poyntes to be merkyd/by whiche poyntes men maye lerne to come to the subtyl knoweleche of suche thynges as dayly ben vsed & had in the counseyllys of lordes and prelates gostly and worldly/and/also emonge marchantes and other comone peple/And this booke is maad for nede and prouffyte of alle god folke/As fer as they in redynge or heeryng of it shal mowe vnderstande and fele the forsayd subtyl deceytes that dayly ben used in the worlde/not to thentente that men shold vse them but that euery man shold eschewe and kepe hym from the subtyl false shrewis that they be not deceyuyd/ Thenne who that wyll haue the very vnderstandyng of this mater/he muste ofte and many tymes rede in thys boke and ernestly and diligently marke wel that he redeth/ffor it is sette subtylly/lyke as ye shal see in redyng of it/ and not ones to rede it ffor a man shal not wyth ones ouer redyng fynde the ryght vnderstandyng ne comprise it wel/but oftymes to rede it shal cause it wel to be vnderstande/And for them that vnderstandeth it/it shall be ryght Joyous playsant and prouffitable

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Now who that said to yow of the ffoxe more or lesse than ye haue herd or red/I holde it for lesynge/but this that ye haue herd or red/that may ye beleue wel/& who that byleueth it not/is not therfore out of the right byleue/how be it/ther be many yf that they had seen it/they shold haue the lasse doubte of it/for ther ben many thynges in the world whiche ben byleuyd though they were neuer seen/ Also ther ben many fygures/playes foũden/that neuer were don ne happed/ But for an example to the peple/that they may therby the better/vse and folowe vertue/& teschewe synne and vyces/in lyke wyse may it be by this booke/that who that wyl rede this mater/though it be of iapes and bourdes/yet he may fynde therin many a good wysedom and lernynges/By whiche he may come to vertue & worship. Ther is no good man blamed herin/hit is spoken generally/Late euery man take his owne part as it belongeth & behoueth/and he that fyndeth hym gylty in ony dele or part therof/late hym bettre & amende hym And he that is veryly good/I pray god kepe hym therin And yf ony thyng be said or wreton herin/that may greue or dysplease ony man/blame not me/but the foxe/ for they be his wordes & not myne/Prayeng alle them that shal see this lytyl treatis/to correcte and amende/Where they shal fynde faute/For I haue not added ne mynusshed but haue folowed as nyghe as I can my copye whiche was in dutche and by me Willm Caxton translated in to this rude & symple englyssh in thabbey of westmestre . fynysshed the vj daye of Juyn the yere of our lord .M.CCCC.lxxxj. and the xxj yere of the regne of kynge Edward the iiijth/

Here endeth the historye of Reynard the foxe &c

REYNARD THE FOX

2ND EDITION. EPILOGUE.

Blades's note :

Unfortunately, the only impression known of this edition wants the last two leaves, which are, however, supplied in manuscript of the seventeenth century, and contain the following epilogue, which may have been translated from a copy as issued by Caxton :

I shall therfore make an end. Now this is the History of Renard so ferre forth as is knowen or mote be gadered out of ould Bokes, and if ony more shal be written of him than is hier set forth, it ben all lyes and falshoods for it is not written ony where what did hereafter befalle hym nor how he dyde, but I weene he was hongid for he hyely deseruyd it, for he was a shrewde and felle theefe and deceivyd the King wth lesingys and so mote all false traytours and such as ben pleynd with ony Vilony be honged by their Neckis I shold be therewith weel apayd. Yet there ben many such w^{ch} neverthelesse abide in great worship alle their livys yet that helpeth not but they goo to helle when they dye and the Deviles pull them by their beardes and brenne their erses wth hote Irons, tho sofre they moche paine for their misdedys: God grant us his grace that we may not comen thereto, for it is an evel place, it growleth me sore and myne heer stondeth right up when I think thereon. But if wee ben trew men and ryght wise wee shall soo be delivered fro the peryl of deth.

Explicit

TULLY

Here begynneth the prohemye upon the reducynge/both out of latyn as of frensshe in to our englyssh tongue/of the polytyque book named Tullius de Senectute. whiche that Tullius wrote vpon the disputacõns & cõmynycacions made to the pussaũt duc Cato senatour of rome by Scipion & Lelius/thẽne beyng yong noble knyghtes & also senatours of the said rome/of the worshippe/recõmendacyon & magnyfycence that shold be gyuen to men of olde age/for theyr desertes & experyence in wysedom of polytyque gouernaũce/ & blamed them that reprouen or lothen olde age/& how Caton exhorteth & coũseilleth olde men to be Ioyeful/and bere pacyently olde age whan it cometh to them/And how Tullius at reuerence of Caton declareth by waye of example . how Enneus thaũcyent philosophre purposeth and wryteth in thre verses compendyously unto his frende Attitus also a senatour of Rome/how he toke grete thought and charge for the gouernaunce of the comyn prouffyght/ffor whiche he deserued grete lawde and honoure in preferryng the same named in latyn Res Publica kepyng the Romaynes prosperous/& defendyng them fro theyr aduersaryes and rebelles/whiche book was translated and thystoryes openly declared . by the ordenaunce & desyre of the noble Auncyent knyght Syr Johan Fastolf of the countee of Norfolk banerette . lyuyng the age of fourscore yere . exercisyng the warrys in the Royame of Fraunce and other countrees/ffor the diffence and vnyuersal welfare of bothe royames of englond and ffraunce by fourty yeres enduryng/the fayte of armes hauntyng . And in Admynystryng Iustice and polytyque gouvernaunce vnder thre kynges. that is to wete HENRY the fourth . HENRY the fyfthe . HENRY the syxthe/and was gouvernour of the duchye of ANGEOU and the coũtee of MAYNE. Capytayn of many townys . Castellys and fortressys in the sayd Royame of ffraunce/hauyng the charge and saufgarde of them dyuerse yeres/occupyeng and rewlynge thre honderd speres and the bowes acustomed thenne/And yeldyng good accompt of the forsaid townes castelles & fortresses to the seyd kynges and to theyr lyeutenauntes/Prynces of noble recomendacion/as JOHAN regent of ffraunce Duc of Bedforde THOMAS duc of excestre/THOMAS duc of clarẽce & other lyeutenauntes/prayeng to take this reducyng pacyently/and submyttyng me to the amendyng & correction of the reder and vnder stonder/that is disposed to rede or haue ony contemplacion in thystoryes of this book/ whiche were drawen and compyled out of the bookes of thauncyent phylosophers of Grece/As in thorygynal text of TULLY DE SENECTUTE in latyn is specyfyed compendyously/ whiche is in maner harde the texte . But this book reduced in Englyssh tongue/is more ample expowned and more swetter to the reder kepyng the juste sentence of the latyn/

Thẽne for as moche as this book thus reduced in to our englyssh is with grete instaũce labour & coste comen in to myn honde which I advuysedly haue seen/ouer redde/and considered the noble . honeste/and vertu⁹ mater necessarily requysite vnto men stepte in age/and to yong men for to lerne/how they owght to come to the same/to whiche euery man naturelly desyreth to atteyne/And the mater and comynycacion of this said book bytwene that wyse and noble man CATO/ on that one parte/and Scipio and Lelius two yonge knyghtes on that other parte . is moche behoeffull to be knowen to euery man. vertuous and wel disposed of what some euer eage resonable that he be . Thenne by cause I haue not seen ony of the same here to fore . I haue endeuoured me to gete it with grete difficulte/and so goten/haue put it in enprynte & diligently aftir my lytil vnderstandyng corrected it/to thentente/that noble/vertu⁹ and wel disposed men myght haue it to loke on & to vnderstonde it . And this book is not requysyte ne eke conuenyent for euery rude and symple man. whiche vnderstandeth not of science ne connyng . and for suche as haue not herde of the noble polycye/and prudence of the Romaynes/but for noble/wyse/& grete lordes gentilmen

& marchaũts that haue seen & dayly ben occupyed in maters towchyng the publyque weal/And in especial vnto them that been passed theyr grene yongthe/and eke theyr myddle eage called virylyte/and ben approchid vnto senectute callyd olde and auncyent eage . wherin they may see how to suffre & bere the same pacyently . and what surete & vertue ben in the same/And haue also cause to be joyous & glad/that they haue escaped and passed the manyfolde peryllys & doubteuous aduentures that ben in Iuvente & yongthe/as in this said booke here folowyng ye may more playnly see . whiche booke endyted & wrote in latyn/the noble philosopher and prynce of Eloquence TULLIUS Consul Romayn . within the breste of whom/Phylosophye naturel and morall had chosen her domycill Out of whiche it hath ben translated in to frensh and aftir in to our Englyssh tongue . as hier aftir al alonge ye may see/

Also when the said TULLIUS had made his book de senectute. he aftir made another book callid de amicicia . that is to saye of frendship In which he reherceth of two yong knyghtes of Rome that one named Sevola . and that other Faunyus/ bothe sones in lawe vnto Lelius a noble senatour of Rome . and felawe and alyed in frendship with Scipio Affrykan/whiche within fewe dayes to fore was deed . How they desyred to knowe of the frendship that bytwene the said Scipio whyles he lived/& Lelius theyr said feder in lawe/And of the disputacion in frendship/as alle playnly it appiereth in the same/ which book was translated by the vertuous and noble Erle therle of wurcestre in to our englyssh tongue/And by cause it is accordyng/and requysyte to haue frendship Joyned to olde eage/I haue enprynted the said book of frendship and annexed to it the book of eage . which book of frendship is ful necessary & behoefful vnto euery estate & degree & aftir I haue sette in this said book folowyng them bothe a noble treatys of the declamacion of two noble knyghtes Romaynes in makyng of the oracions tofore the Senate to knowe wherin noblesse resteth . And thus this volume is dyvyded in to thre particuler werkes . whiche ben of grete wysedom in olde age/very love in frendship . And the question wherin noblesse resteth/whiche lytil volume I haue emprysed tenprynte vnder the vmbre and shadowe of the noble proteccion of our moost dradde soueräyn and naturel lyege lord/and moost Christen kyng kyng Edward the fourth/to whom I moste humbly byseche to receyue the said book of me William Caxton his moost humble subget and litil seruaunt/and not to desdeyne to take it of me so poure ignoraunt & symple a persone . And of his moost boũtyuous grace to pardõne me so presumyng/ besechyng Almyghty god to kepe mayntene/and graunte to hym longe lyf and prosperous and thaccomplysshement of his hye and noble desyres . And aftir this short and transitorye lyf euirlastyng lyf and Ioye in heuen . Amen : :

Explicit ·.·

Thus endeth the boke of Tulle of olde age translated out of latyn in to frenshe by lawrence de primo facto at the comaundement of the noble prynce Lowys Duc of Burbon/and enprynted by me symple persone William Caxton in to Englysshe at the playsir solace and ruerence of men growyng in to olde age the xii day of August the yere of our lord .M.CCCC.lxxxj :

TULLY OF FRIENDSHIP

Here foloweth the said Tullius de Amicicia translated in to our maternall Englissh tongue by the noble famous Erle/The Erle of wurcestre sone & heyer to the lord typtoft/which in his tyme flowred in vertue/& cunnyng/to whom I knewe none like emonge the lordes of the temporalite in science & moral vertue/I beseche almyghty god/to haue mercy on his sowle/ & pray al them that shal here or rede this lityl treatys moch vertuꝰ of frendship in like wise of your charyte to remẽbre his soule emong your prayers/And by cause this werke was made by the prince of Eloquence Tullius intitled de Amycicia aftir that he had acheuid his boke de senectute/as heretofore ye maye more playnly see at large/theñe me semeth it requisite & necessarye that I sette in folowing the said book/this book de Amicicia/whiche by goddes grace shal playnly folowe/

Epilogue.

Thus endeth this boke named Tullius de Amicicia/whiche treateth of frendship vtterid and declared by a noble senatour of Rome named Lelyus unto his two sones in lawe also noble men of Rome named Faunyus & Seuola . In which they desyred hym to enforme them of the frendship/that was bytwene the said LELIUS and the noble prynce SCIPIO AFFRICAN . wherein he hath answered & tolde to them the noble vertues that ben in frendship And withoute vertue veray frendship may not be. as he preuyth by many exsamples and notable conclusions as here to fore is moch playnly expressyd & said all a longe/whiche werke was translated by the vertuous and noble lord and Erl^{e} therle of worcestre. on whoos sowle I bechese almyghty god to haue mercy/And alle ye that shal rede or here this sayd werke of your charyte I beseche you to praye for hym. And by cause this said book de Amicicia is ful necessarye and requysyte to be had and knowen. I haue putt it in emprynte/to thentent/that veray amyte and frendship may be had as it ought to be in euery estate and degree/And vertue withoute whiche frendship may not be had may be encreaced . and vices eschewid. Thenne whan I had enprynted the book of olde age/whiche the said Tullyus made/me semed it accordyng that this said booke of frendship shold folowe/by cause/ther can not be annexed to olde age a bettir thynge/than good and very frendship. which two said bokes here to fore wreton ben of grete wisedom and auctoryte/And full necessarye behoefful and requysite vnto euery age estate and degree/And that they prouffyte in encreacyng of vertue/ I beseche the blessyd Trynyte to geue and graunte vnto alle them that shal rede & here thise bokes/ And so to flee & eschewe vices & synnes/that by the merytes of vertuouse honeste/and good werkes/we may atteyne aftir this shorte/transytorye lyf the eternall blessyd lyf in heuen/ where is joye and glorye withoute ende. Amen.

EPILOGUE OF NOBLESSE

As touchyng the sentence dyffynytyf gyuen by the Senate aftir thise two noble knyghtes had purposed and shewed theyr Oracions I fynde none as yet pronounced ne gyuen of whiche myn auctor maketh ony mencion of in his book/Thenne I wolde demaunde of theym that shal rede or here this book. whiche of thies tweyne that is to saye CORNELIUS SCIPIO and GAYUS FLAMMYNEUS was moost noble. And in whiche of theym bothe. aftir the contente of theyr oracions that noblesse resteth And to hym Iuge ye this noble and vertuous lady Lucresse to be maryed/And here I make an ende of this mater for this tyme/Prayeng and requyryng all theym that in this said werke shal haue ony playsyre/that ye wil remembre hym that translated it in to our maternal and Esglyssh tongue/ And not only this said werke but the book of TULLIUS DE AMICICIA here to fore enprynted which treateth so wel of frendship & amyte/I mene the right vertu⁹ and noble Erle. Therle of wurcestre/whiche late pytously lost his lyf/whos soule I recommende vnto your special prayers. and also in his tyme made many other vertuous werkys/whiche I haue herd of/O good blessyd lord god. what grete losse was it of that noble vertuous and wel disposed lord/whan I remembre and aduertyse his lyf/his science. and his vertue/me thynketh god not displesyd . ouer grete a losse of suche a man/consyderyng his estate and connyng. And also thexercise of the same. with the grete laboures in gooyng on pylgremage unto Iherusalem visytyng there the holy places. that oure blessyd lord Jhesu Christe halowed with his blessyd presence. And shedyng there his precious blood for oure redempcion. And from thens ascended vnto his fader in heuen. And what worship had he at Rome in the presence of our holy fader the pope. And so in alle other places vnto his deth/At whiche deth euery man that was there. myght lerne to dye and take his deth paciently/wherein I hope and doubte not/but that god receyued his soule in to his euirlastyng blysse ffor as I am enformed he ryght aduysedly ordeyned alle his thynges as well for his last will of worldly goodes as for his sowle helthe. & pacyently and holyly without grudchyng in charyte to fore that he departed out of this world/whiche is gladsom and Ioyous to here/Thenne I here recommende his sowle vnto youre prayers/and also that we at our departyng maye departe in suche wyse/that it maye please our lord god to receyue vs into his euirlastyng blysse. Amen.

Explicit per Caxton

DESCRIPTION OF BRITAIN

PROLOGUE.

Hit is so that in many and diuerse places the comyn cronicles of englond ben had and also now late enprinted at westmynstre And for as moche as the descripcion of this londe whiche of olde tyme was named albyon/and after Britayne is not descriued ne comynly had/ne the noblenesse and worthynesse of the same is not knowen/Therfor J entende to sette in this booke the descripcōn of this said Jle of Britayne with the commoditees of the same

EPILOGUE.

Here endeth the discripcion of Britayne the/whiche conteyneth englond wales and scotland/& also bicause Irlonde is vnder the reule of englond & of olde tyme it hath so continued therfore J haue sette the descripcion of the same after the said brituyne/which J haue taken oute of policronicon/And bicause it is necessarie to alle englisshmen to knowe the propretees cōmoditees & meruailles of them. therefore J haue sette them in enprinte according to the translacion of Treuisa/ whiche atte request of the lord Barkeley translated the book of Policronicon in to englissh/Fynysshed by me william Caxton the xviij. day of August the yere of our lord god M.CCCC.lxxx. and the xx. yere of the regne of kyng Edward the fourthe.

GODFREY OF BOULOGNE

The hye couragyous faytes/And valyaunt actes of noble . Illustrious and vertuous personnes ben digne to be recounted/ put in memorye/and wreton . to thende that there may be gyuen to them name Immortal by soverayn laude and preysyng. And also for to moeue and tenflawme the hertes of the Redars and hierers. for teschewe and flee werkes vycious.

dishonnest and vytuperable/And for tempryse and accomplysshe enterpryses honnestes and werkes of gloryous meryte. to liue in remembraunce perpetuel/ffor as it is so that thystoryographes haue wreton many a noble hystorye as wel in metre as in prose. By whiche thactes and noble fayttes of thauncyent conquerours ben had in remembraunce. and remayne in grete. large/and aourned volumes/and so shal abyde in perpetuel memorye to thentente that gloryous Prynces and hye men of noble and vertuouse courage shold take ensample tempryse werkys leeful and honneste/Fyrst for goddes quarell/in mayntenyng oure fayth and the libertees of holy chirche. For the recuperacion of the holy land whiche our blessyd lord Ihesu Christe hath halowed by his blessyd presence humayne/and by shedyng therin for our redeppcion his precious blood. ffor the releef of suche christen men as ther dwelle in grete myserye and thraldom̃. And also for the defence of theyr Royammes. Londes. Enherytages/and subgettes And for these causes tendeuoyre theym in their noble persones/and with alle theyr puyssaũces and power. tadresse and remysse theym in their auncyent Fraunchyses and lyberte/ Acordyng to that we fynde wreton in holy scripture of many noble historyes. which were ouer long to reherce. But in especial of thre noble and mooste worthy of alle other. that is to wytte fyrste of duc Iosue that noble prynce/whiche ladde and conduyted the Children of Israhel the chosen people of God oute of deserte in to the londe of promyssyon the Londe flowynge Mylke and hony. Socondly of Dauyd the Kynge and holy Prophete/Whome God chaas after his herte/And achyeuyd many grete Bataylles gouernyng the sayd chosen people of God by the space of fourty yeris/And the thyrde of the Noble Iudas Machabeus how he deffended the sayd people in fyghtyng many and merueyllous bataylles. for veray zeele and loue of his lawe and mayntenyng of the same. unto the deth. ffor which causes aforesayd the names of thyes thre abyde perpetuel for thre of the moste beste and nobleste of the Iewes/And in the nombre of the moste digne and moost worthy/

And by cause valyaunce and prowesse is remembryd emong the gentyles & paynmes. as emong thebrewes I fynde werton of the incredible. cheualrous. prowesse of the noble and valyaunt Hector of troye. whos excellent actes. wryten/Ovyde/ Homer Virgyle/Dares Dyctes and other dyuerse. and eche better than other reherchyng his noble vertues/strengthe and humanyte/Secondly of Alysaunder the grete kynge of Macedone.

which domyned and had to him obeysaunt the unyuersal world And the thyrde the noble Julyus Cezar/Emperour of Rome. whos noble actes ben wreton by poetes as lucan/stace and other/And dayly remembryd as newe and ffresshe as he yet lyuyd/whiche thre ben sette as for the moost worthy emong the gentyles and paynems.

Now let us then remembre. what hystoryes ben wreton of Cristen men of whom ther be many wreton. But in especial as for the best and worthyest I fynde first. the gloryous/most excellent in his tyme/and fyrst founder of the round table/Kyng Arthur kyng of the brytons that tyme regnyng in this Royamme/of whos retenue were many noble Kynges. Prynces/lordes : and knyghtes. of which the noblest were knyghtes of the round table. of whos actes and historyes there be large volumes and bookes grete plente and many/O blessyd lord whan I remembre the grete and many volumes of saynt graal/ghalehot and launcelotte de lake/Gawayn perceual/Lyonel/and tristam and many other. of whom were ouer longe to reherce/and also to me unknowen. But thystorye of the sayd Arthur is so gloryous and shynyng that he is stalled in the fyrst place of the mooste noble/beste and worthyest of the cristen men. Secondly of Charlemayn. the grete Emperour of Allemayne and kyng of ffraunce/whos noble actes and conquestes ben wreton in large volumes with the noble faytes and actes of his douze pieres. that is to saye. Rowland and olyuer/with the other/whos name and renommee abydeth also perpetuel. and is stalled in the second place emonge the most worthy of Cristen men. Of alle thyse historyes a for reherced the bookes and volumes ben had in latyn ffrenssh and Englysshe and other language

Thenne as for the thyrd of the Cristen prynces taken reputed and renommed for to be egal emong thyse worthy & best that euer were. I mene the noble Godefroye of Boloyne/whiche now but late not yet four C. yere syth he flowred. and was stalled in the thyrde stalle of the moost worthy of Cristen men. whos hystorye is made and wreton in Latyn and ffrensshe in large and grete volumes/ And as not knowen emonge us here/whiche ben adiacent and neyghbours to the place of his natyuyte/whos noble hystorye I late fonde in a booke of ffrenesh al alonge of his noble actes valyaunces prowesses/and accomplysshement of his hye empryses/In whiche I fynde very causes as me seemeth moche semblable and lyke. unto suche as. we have nowe dayly tofore us. By the mescreauntes and turkes emprysed/ayenst Christendom. And yet moche more nowe than were in his dayes/ffor in his dayes the turkes had conquerd vpon Cristendom but vnto the braas of seynt George by Constantynople And had no foote on this syde of the sayd braas. But at this daye it is so that they haue comen ouer and goten that imperial Cyte Constantynople aforsayd/and many Royamme and countre/to the grete dommage and hurte of alle Cristendom/ To the resistence of whom as yet fewe Cristen Prynces haue put theym in deuoyr. Thenne I retorne agayn vnto the conqueste at suche tyme as they were come to the sayd Braas. that by the dylygent solicitude of a pour heremyte/the sayd Godeffroy of Boloyne. and other dyuerse prynces/lordes and comyn peple auowed the croysyng and empryse to warre agayn the mescreauntes. And to recouere the holy Cyte of Ihersualem. whiche afterward they achyeued. and conquerd fro the sayd braas unto the holy lande and recouerd the holy cyte of Iherusalem/as in this sayd boook al alonge and playnly shal appere. In whiche cyte the sayd Godeffroy was elect and chosen for his vertue/prowesse/and blessyd disposicion to be kyng of the sayd Iherusalem, and the londe therabout

Thenne I thus vysytyng this noble hystorye/whiche is no fable ne fayned thynge. But alle that is therin trewe/Considerynge also the grete puyssaunce of the Turke grete enemye of our Cristen fayth destroyer of Cristen blood and vsurper of certayn Empyres and many Cristen Royammes and countrees. And now late this sayd yere hath assaylled the Cyte and castel in the Isle of rhodes/where valyantly he hath be resisted. but yet notwythstondyng he hath approched more ner. & hath takẽ the Cyte of Ydronte in puylle. By whiche he hath goten an entre to entre in to the Royamme of Naples. And fro thens withoute he be resisted vnto Rome & ytalye/to whos resistence. I beseche almyghty God to prouyde yf it be his wylle. Thenne me semeth it necessary and expedyent for alle Cristen prynces to make peas/amyte and allyaunce eche with other. and prouyde by theyr wysedom̃es the resistence agayn hym for the defense of our fayth and moder/holy chirche/& also for the recuperacion of the holy londe & holy Cyte of Iherusalem/In whiche our blessyd sauyour Ihesu Christ redemed us with his precious blood. And to doo as this noble Prynce Godeffroy of Boloyne dyde with other noble and hye prynces in his companye. Thenne for thexortacion of alle Cristen Prynces/Lordes/ Barons/Knyghtes/Gentilmen Marchauntes/and all the comyn peple of this noble Royamme walys & yrlond I haue emprysed to translate this book of the conquest of Iherusalem out of ffrenssh in to our maternal tongue/to thentente tencourage them by the redyng and heeryng of the meruellous historyes herin comprysed and of the holy myracles shewyd/that euery man in his partye endeuoyre theym vnto the resistence afore sayd/And recuperacion of the sayd holy londe. & for as moche as I knowe no Cristen kynge better prouyd in Armes. and for whom god hath shewed more grace/And in alle his empryses gloryous vaynquysshour, happy and eurous/than is our natural/lawful/and souerayn lord and moost cristen kynge/ Edward by the grace of god kynge of englond and of ffraunce and lord of Yrland/vnder the shadowe of whose noble protection/I haue achyeued this symple translacion/that he of his moost noble grace wold addresse styre or commaunde somme noble Capytayn of his subgettes to empryse this warre agayn the sayd turke & hethen peple. to whiche I can thynke that euery man wyll put hand to in their propre persones/ and in theyr meuable goodes/Thenne to hym my moost drad naturel and soverayn lord I adresse this symple and rude booke besechyng his moost bounteuous and haboundaunt grace to receyue it of me his indigne and humble subgette William Caxton. And to pardonne me so presumynge. besechyng almyghty god that this sayd book may encourage/ moeue. and enflamme the hertes of somme noble men. that by the same the mescreauntes maye be resisted and put to rebuke. Cristen fayth encreased and enhaunced. and the holy lande. with the blessyd cyte of Iherusalem. recouerd and may come agayn into cristen mens hondes. Thenne I exhorte alle noble men of hye courage to see this booke and here it redde. by whiche ye shal see what wayes were taken: what noble prowesses and valyaunces were acheyued by the noble companyes. & especial by the sayd noble prynce godeffroy of boloyne duc of Loreyne/by whiche he deseruyd the name of one of the moost worthy that euer were. and is stalled in the thyrd stalle of the Cristen conquerours/And in the nynthe of the moost worthy/where his name and renomme shal remayne and abyde perpetuel/And for to deserue the tenthe place I beseche almyghty God to graunte and ottroye to our sayd souerayn lord. or to one of his noble progenye/I meane my lord Prynce/and my lord Rychard duc. of yorke and norfolke. to whom I humbly beseche/at thayr leyzer and playsyr to see & here redde this symple book. by which they may be encouraged to deserue lawde and honour and that their name and renomme may encrease and remayne perpetuel/And after this lyf short and transytorte/All we may atteyne to come to the euerlastyng lyf in heuen. where is ioye and reste withoute ende. Amen

Thus endeth this book Intitled the laste siege and conqueste of Jherusalem with many other historyes therein comprysed/ Fyrst of Eracles/and of the meseases of the cristen men in the holy londe/And of their releef & conquest of Jherusalem/ and how Godeffroy of boloyne was first kyng of the latyns in that royamme & of his deth. translated & reduced out of ffrensshe in to englysshe by me symple persone Wylliam Caxton to thende that euery cristen man may be the better encoraged tenterprise warre for the defense of Cristendom. and to recouer the sayd Cyte of Jherusalem in whiche oure blessyd sauyour Jhesu Criste suffred deth for al mankynde. and roose fro deth to lyf/And fro the same holy londe ascended in to heuen. And also that Cristen peple one vnyed in a veray peas/myght empryse to goo theder in pylgremage with strong honde for to expelle the sarasyns and turkes out of the same that our lord myght be ther seruyd & worshipped of his chosen cristen peple in that holy & blessyd londe in which he was Jncarnate and blissyd it with the presence of his blessyd body whyles he was here in erthe emonge vs/by whiche conquest we myght deserue after this present short and transitorye lyf. the celestial lyf to dwelle in heuen eternally in ioye without ende Amen/whiche book I presente vnto the mooste Cristen kynge kynge Edward the fourth. humbly besechyng his hyenes to take no displesyr at me so presumyng. whiche book J began in marche the xij daye and fynysshed the vij day of Juyn/the yere of our lord .M.CCCC.lxxxxj & the xxj yere of the regne of our sayd sauerayn lord kyng Edward the fourth. & in this maner sette in forme & enprynted the xx day of nouembre the yere a forsayd in thabbay of westmester by the sayd wylliam Caxton.

GOLDEN LEGEND

The holy & blessed doctour saynt Jerom sayth thys auctoryte/ do alweye somme good werke/to thende that the deuyl fynde the not ydle/And the holy doctour saynt austyn sayth in the book of the labour of monkes/that no man stronge or myghty to laboure ought to be ydle for which cause whan I had parfourmed & accomplisshed dyuers werkys & hystoryes translated out of frensshe in to englysshe at the requeste of certeyn lordes/ladyes and gentlymen/as thystorye of the recuyel of Troye/the book of the chesse/the hystorye of Jason/The hystorye of the mirrour of the world/the xv bookes of Metamorphoseos in whyche ben conteyned the fables of ouyde/and the hystorye of Godefroy of boloyn in the conqueste of Iherusalem/wyth other dyuers werkys & bookes/I nyste what werke to begynne and put forth after the said werkys to fore made/& for as moche as ydlenesse is so moche blamed/as sayth saynt bernard the myllyfluous doctour that she is moder of lyes/& stepdame of vertues/& it is she that ouerthroweth stronge men in to synne/quenchyth vertue/nouryssheth pride/and maketh the waye redy to goo to helle/and Johan cassyodore sayth that the thouȝt of hym that is ydle thynketh of none other thynge but on lychorous metys & vyandes for his bely/and the holy saynt bernard aforesayd sayth in an epystle/whan the tyme shal come/that it shal behoue vs to rendre and gyue accomptes of our ydle tyme/what reson may we rendre/or what answer shal we gyue/whan in ydlenes is none excuse/& prosper sayth that whosomeuer lyueth in ydlenesse/lyueth in manere of a dombe beest/and bycause I haue seen the auctorytees/that blame and despyse so moche ydlenes/& also knowe wel that it is one of the capytal and dedely synnes moche hateful vnto god Therefore I haue concluded & fermely purposed in my self nomore to be ydle but wyl applye my self to laboure and suche occupacion as I haue be accustomed to do/& for as moche as saynt austyn aforesayd sayth vpon a psalme/that good werke ought not to be doon for fere of payne/but for the loue of rightwysnesse/& that it be of veray and souerayne fraunchyse and by cause me semeth to be a souerayn wele to Incyte and exhorte men & wymmen to kepe them from slouthe and ydlenesse/and to lete to be vnderstonden to suche peple as been not letterd/the natyuytees/the lyues/the passyons/the myracles/and the dethe of the holy sayntes/& also soṁe other notorye dedes and actes of tymes passed/I haue submysed my self to translate in no englysshe the legende of sayntes/which is callyd legenda aurea in latyn/that is to say the golden legende for in lyke wyse as gold is moste noble aboue al other metalles/in lyke wyse is thys legende holden moost noble aboue al other werkys/ageynst me here myght somme persones saye that thys legende hath be translated tofore and trouthe it is/but for as moche as I had by me a legende in frensshe/another in latyn/ & the thyrd in englysshe whiche varyed in many and dyuers places/and also many hystoryes were comprysed in the two other bookes/whiche were not in the englysshe book and therfore I haue wryton one oute of the sayd thre bookes/ which I haue ordryd otherwyse than the sayd englysshe legende is/whiche was tofore made/besechyng alle theym that shall see or here it redde to pardone me where I haue erryd/ or made fawte/whiche yf ony be/is of ygnoraunce and ageyn my wylle/and submytte it hooly of suche as can & may to correcte it/humbly bysechyng them so to doo/and in so doyng/they shal deserue a synguler lawde and meryte/and I shal praye for them vnto almighty god that he of his benygne grace rewarde them &c And that it prouffyte to alle them that shal rede or here it redde/and may encreace in them vertue/and expelle vyce and synne/that by the ensaumple of the holy sayntes amende theyr lyuyng here in thys shorte lyf/ that by their merytes/they and I may come to euerlastyng lyf & blysse in heuen amen/

And for as moche as this sayd werke was grete & ouer chargeable to me taccomplisshe I feryd me in the begynnyng of the translacion to haue contynued it/by cause of the long tyme of the translacion & also in thenpryntyng of y^{e} same & in maner halfe desperate to haue accomplisshed it/was in purpose to haue lefte it/after that I had begonne to translate it/& to haue layed it aparte ne had it be at thynstaunce & requeste of the puyssant noble & vertuous erle my lord wyllyam erle of arondel/whiche desyred me to procede and contynue the said werke/& promysed me to take a resonable quãtyte of them when they were acheyued & accomplisshed/and sente to me a worshypful gentylman/a servaunte of his named John Stanney whych solycyted me in my Lordes name that I shold in no wyse leue it but accomplisshe it promysyng that my sayd lord shold duryng my lyf geue & graunte to me a yerely fee/that is to wete a bucke in sommer/and a doo in wynter/ with whiche fee I holde me wel contente/Thenne atte contemplacion and reuerence of my sayd lord/J haue endeuoyred me to make an ende and fynysshe thys sayd translacion/and also haue enprynted it in the moost best Wyse that I haue coude or myght/and presente this sayd book to his good and noble lordshyp/as chyef causer of the achyeuyng of hit prayeng hym to take it in gree of me Wyllyam caxton hys poure seruaunte/

and that it lyke hym to remembre my fee/& I shal praye vnto almyghty god for his longe lyf & welfare/and after this shorte and transytorye lyf to come in to euerlastyng ioye in heuen/ the whiche he sende to hym & me/& vnto al them that shal rede and here this sayd book/that for the loue and feythe of whome al these holy payntes hath suffred deth and passyon. Amen.

EPILOGUE.

Thus endeth the legende named in latyn legenda aurea/ that is to saye in englysshe the golden legende/For lyke as golde passeth in valewe alle other metalles/so thys legende excedeth alle other bookes/wherin ben conteyned alle the hygh and grete festys of our lord/the festys of our blessyd lady/the lyues passyons myracles of many other sayntes/and other hystoryes and actes/as al allonge here afore is made mencyon/Whiche werke I haue accomplisshed at the commandemente and requeste of the noble and puyssaunte erle/ and my special good lord Wyllyam erle of arondel/& haue fynysshed it at westmestre the twenty day of nouembre/the yere of our lord M/CCCC/lxxxiij/& the fyrst yere of the reygne of Kyng Rychard the thyrd

By me Wyllyam Caxton

GOLDEN LEGEND

Fol. viii recto (Circumcision)

Also it is said that it is in the chirche of our lady at ãdwarp in braband/And there I knowe well y^{t} on trynyte sonday they shewe it with grete reuerence/And is there born abowte with a grete and a solempne procession and that though I be vnworthy haue seen dyuerse tymes and haue rede and herd there of many myracles that god hath shewd there for it/And as towchyng I haue herd saye there/that there was a Cardynal sente fro Rome for to see it/And as he was at his masse solempnly it/was leyd on the corporas at whiche tyme it bled thre dropes of blood on the said corporas/There they worshippe it as fore the flessh of our lord which was cutte of at his circumsicion & named it there prepucium dñi/yf it be trewe/ to somme it semeth merueyll by cause it is so that the flessh that was cut of was of the very flessh that was cutte of his body humayne/

Fol. lxx recto (Thystorye of David)

For as I ones was by yonde the see Rydyng in the companye of a noble knyght named Syr John Capons and was also doctour in bothe laws/& was born in malyorke and had ben viceroye and gouernour of Aragon and Catelone/& that tyme Coũceyllor unto the duc of bourgonye Charloys/It happend we comened of the hystorye of David/and this said noble man told me that he had redde that dauid dyde this penaũce folowyng for thyse said synnes/that he dalf hym in the ground standyng nakyd vnto the heed so longe that the wormes began to crepe in his flesshe/and made a verse of this psalme Miserere/and theñe cam out/and whan he was hole therof/ he wente in agayn/and stode so agayn as longe as afore is said and made the second verse/and so as many tymes he was doluen in the erth as ben verse in the said psalme of Miserere mei deus/and euery tyme was abydyng therin tyl he felte the wormes crepe in his flesshe/This was a grete penaunce and a token of grete repentaunce/For ther ben in the psalme xx verses/And xx tymes he wa doluẽ Thus thys noble man told me rydyng bytwene the toun of Gaunt in Flaundres and the toun of Bruxellis in Braband/

Fol. lxvi verso (The lyf of saynt Austyn)

Many other myracles hath god shewed by his lyfe/and also after his deth whiche were ouer longe to wryte in this booke/ For they wold J suppose conteyne a book as moche as al this & more/but among other under correction J wylle sette here in one myracle/whiche J haue sene paynted on an aulter of saynt Austyn at the black Freres at Andwerpe/how be it/J fynde hit not in the legende myn exampler/neyther in Englysshe/Frensshe/ne in latyn/It was soo that this gloryous Doctour made and compyled many volummes as afore is sayde among whome he made a book of the Trynyte/Jn whiche he studyed/and mused sore in his mynde/soo ferforthe/that on a tyme as he wente by the see syde in Aufryke studyeng on the Trynyte/he fonde by the see syde a lytel childe/whiche hadde made a lytel pytte in the sonde/and in his honde a lytel spone/

And wyth the spone he tooke oute water of the large See/ and poured hit in to the pytte And whanne saynt augustyn behelde hym/he merueyled/and demaunded hym/what he dyde And he answerd and sayd/J wylle lade oute/and brynge alle this water of this See in to this pytte/what said he/hit is Jmpossible/How maye hit be done/sythe the See is soo grete and large/and thy pytte and spone soo lytylle/yes forsothe sayd he/J shalle lyghtlyer/and sonner drawe alle the water of the See/And brynge hit in to this pytte/than thow shalt brynge the mysterye of the Trynyte and his dyuynyte in to thy lytel vnderstandynge/as to the regard therof For the mysterye of the Trynyte is greter and larger to the comparyson of thy witte and brayne/that is this grete see vnto this lytel pytte

And therwyth the childe vanysshed awey/ thenne here may euery man take ensample/that no man/and specially symple lettred men/ne vnlerned presume to entremete ne to muse on hyghe thynges of the godhede ferther than we be enfourmed by our faythe/For our only feyth shalle suffyse vs/

Thenne her wyth J make an ende of the lyf of thys gloryous Doctor saynt Austyn/to whome late vs deuoutely praye/that he be a medyatour and aduocate vnto the blessyd Trynyte/ that we maye amende oure synful lyfe in this transytorye world/that whan we shalle departe/we may come to euerlastyng blysse in heuen/AMEN/

Fol. Clvij verso (Lyf of saynt George)

Thys blessyd and holy marter saynt George is patrone of this royame of englond/and the crye of men of warre/Jn the worshyp of whome is founded the noble ordre of the garter/ And also a noble college in the castell of wyndesore/by kynges of englond/In whiche college is the herte of Saynt george/ whyche Sygysmond the Emperour of alamayn broughte and gafe for a grete and a precious relyque to Kyng Harry the fyfthe/ And also the sayd sygismonde was a broder of the sayd garter/ And also there is a pyece of his heed which college is nobly endowed to thonoure and worshyp of almyghty god/and hys blessyd marter saynt george/Thenne let vs praye vnto hym that he be special protectour and defendour of thys royame/

BOOK CALLID CATON

Here begynneth the prologue or prohemye of the book callid Caton/whiche booke hath ben translated in to Englysshe by Mayster Benet Burgh/late Archedeken of Colchestre and hye chanon of saint stephens at Westmestre/ which ful craftly hath made it in balade ryal for the erudicion of my lord Bousher/Sone & heyr at that tyme to my lord the erle of Estsex And by cause of late cam to my hand a book of the said Caton in Frensshe/whiche reherceth many a fayr lernynge and notable ensamples/I haue translated it oute of ffrensshe in to Englysshe as al along hereafter shalle appiere/which I presente vnto the Cyte of london/

Unto the noble auncyent/and renõmed Cyte/the Cyte of london in Englond/J William Caxton Cytezeyn & coniurye of the same/& of the fraternyte & felauship of the mercerye owe of ryght my servyse & good wyll/and of very dute am bounden naturelly to assiste ayde & counceille as ferforth as I can to my power/as to my moder/of whom I haue receyued my noureture & lyuynge/And shal praye for the good prosperite & polecye of the same duryng my lyf/for as me semeth it is of grete nede/by cause I haue knowen in my yong age moche more welthy prosperous & rycher than it is at this day/And the cause is that ther is almost none/that entendeth to the comyn wele but only euery men for his singular prouffyte/O whan I remembre the noble Romayns/that for the comyn wele of the Cyte of Rome/they spente not only theyr moeuable goodes/but they put theyr bodyes & liues in Ieopardy & to the deth/as by many a noble ensample we may see in thactes of Romayns/as of the two noble scipions African & Asyan/Actilius & many other/and amonge al other the noble Catho auctor & maker of this book/whiche he/hath lefte for to remayne euer to al the peple for to lerne in hit and to knowe how euery men ought to rewle and gouerne hym in this lyf/as wel for the lyf temporall/as for the lyf spyrytuel/ And as in my Jugement it is the beste book for to be taughte to yonge children in schole/and also to peple of euery age it is ful conuenient yf it be wel understanden/And by cause J see that the children that ben borne within the sayd cyte encrease/and prouffyte not lyke theyr faders and olders/bot for the moost parte after they ben comen to theyr parfight yeres of discrecion/and rypenes of age/how wel that theyre faders haue lefte to them grete quantite of goodes/yet scarcely amonge ten two thryve/J haue sene and knowen in other londes in diverce cytees/that of one name and lygnage succesyuely haue endured prosperously many heyres/ye a v or vi honderd yere/and somme a thousand/And in this noble cyte of london/it can vnnethe contynue vnto the thyrd heyr or scarcely to the second/O blessyd lord whanne J remembre this J am al abasshyed/J can not Juge the cause/but fayrer ne wyser ne bet bespoken children in theyre yongthe ben nowher than ther ben in london/but at their ful rypyng ther is no carnel ne good corn founder but chaff for the moost parte/I wote wel ther be many noble and wyse/and proue wel & ben better and rycher than euer were theyr faders/ And to thende that many myght come to honoure and worshyppe/J entende to translate this sayd book of cathon/in whiche J doubte not/and yf they wylle rede it and vnderstande they shal moche the better conne rewle themself ther by/For among all other bookes this is a synguler book/and may be callyd the Regyment or gouernaunce of the body and sowle

There was a noble clerke named Pogius of Florence/And was secretary to pope Eugenye/& also to pope Nycholas whyche had in the cyte of Florence a noble & well stuffed lybrarye/ whiche alle noble straungyers comynge to Florence desyred to see/And therin they fonde many noble and rare bookes And whanne they had axyd of hym whiche was the best boke of them alle/and that he reputed for best/He sayd/that he helde Cathon glosed for the best book of his lyberarye/Thenne syth that he that was so noble a Clerke helde this book for the best/doubtles/hit must folowe that this is a noble booke/ and a vertuous/and suche a one that a man may eschewe alle vyces and ensiewe vertue/Thenne to thende that this sayd book may prouffyte vnto the herars of it/J byseche Almyghty god that J may acheve and accomplysshe it unto his laude and glorye And to therudicion and lernynge of them that ben ygnoraũt that they maye there by prouffyte and be the better/ And J requyre and byseche alle suche that fynde faute or errour/that of theyr charyte they correcte and amende hit/ And J shalle hertely praye for them to Almyghty god/that he rewarde them

In this smal lytyl booke is conteyned a short and prouffitable doctryne for al maner of peple/the whiche is taken & composed upon the said book of Cathon with some addicions and auctoritees of holy doctours & prophetes/And also many Historyes & ensamples autentyke of holy faders & auncyent Cronykles trewe & approuved

THE KNYGHTE OF THE TOWRE TO HIS DOUGHTERS

Alle vertuouse doctryne & techynge had & lerned of suche as haue endeuoured them to leue for a remembraunce after theyr dethe to vs/by whiche we ben enfourmed in scyence/wysedom and vnderstandyng of knowleche/hou we ought to rewle our self in this present lyf/haue caused vs to know many good reules/& vertuouse maners to be gouerned by/Emonge al other this book is a special doctryne & techyng by which al yong gentyl wymen specially may lerne to bihaue them self vertuously/as wel in their vyrgynyte as in their wedlok & wedowhede/as al along shal be more playnly said in the same/which boke is comen to my handes by the request & desyre of a noble lady which hath brouȝt forth many noble & fayr douȝters which ben vertuously nourisshed & lerned/And for very ziele & loue that she hath alway had to her fayr children & yet hath for to haue more knouleche in vertue to thende y^{t} they may alwey perseuere in y^{e} same hath desired & required me to trãslate & reduce this said book out of frenssh in to our vulgar englissh/to thẽde that it may the better be vnderstõde of al suche as may rede or here it/wherfor atte cõtemplacion of her good grace after the lytel connyng that god hath sent me/I haue endeuoyryd me to obeye her noble desyre & request/In whiche werk I fynd many vertuous good enseygnementis & lernynges by euydent histories of auctorite & good ensãples for al maner peple in generally/but in especial for ladyes & gentilwymen douȝters to lordes & gentilmen/For whiche book al the gentilwymen now lyuyng & herafter to come shal be arn bounde to gyue laude praysyng & thankynges to the auctor of this book & also to the lady that caused me to trãslate it & to pray for her long lyf & welfare/& when god wil calle her fro this transitory lyf that she may regne in heuen sempiternally where as is Joye & blysse without end/Thẽne for as moche as this book is necessary to euery gentilwoman of what estate she be I aduyse euery gentilman or woman hauyng such children/desyryng them to be vertuously brouȝt forth to gete & haue this book to thende that they may lerne/hou they ouȝt/to gouerne them vertuously in this present lyf/by whiche they may the better & hastlyer come to worship and good renommee/And J desyre all them that shall lerne or see ony thynge in this sayd book/by whiche they shal ben the wyser & better/that they gyue laude & thãkyng to the sayd ladyes good grace/and also to praye for her/And wheras ony defaulte shalle be founde in the reducynge and translatynge in to our Englysshe tongue/that it be arettid to me whiche am Jgnoraunt and not expert in the werke thouȝ so be that J have emprysed here to fore to smattre me in suche translacions whiche J confesse and knowleche me ignoraunt and therin to be Jmperfect/wherfore J humbly requyre and byseche my sayd good lady to pardonne me of my symple and rude reducynge/And yf ony thynge be sayd or made vnto her playsyre/than J thynke my labour wel employed/whome I humbly byseche to receyue this lytel book in gree & thanke/& J shalle pray to almyghty god for her longe and good lyf/and to send her after this shorte and transytory lyf euerlastyng lyf in heuen Amen/And alle other that be vnderstandyng & fyndyng ony defaute/I requyre and pray them of theyre charyte to correcte and amende hit and so doyng they shal deserue thanke and meryte of god/to whome J shalle pray for them/

Here fynysshed the booke whiche the knyght of the Toure made to the enseygnement and techyng of his doughters translated out of the Frenssh in to our maternall Englysshe tongue by me William Caxton whiche book was ended & fynsshed the fyrst day of Iuyn the yere of oure Lord MCCCClxxxiij And enprynted at westmynstre the last day of Ianyuer the fyrst yere of the regne of kynge Rychard the thyrd.

EPILOGUE TO ÆSOP

Now thenne J wylle fynysshe alle these fables wyth this tale that foloweth whiche a worshipful preest and a parsone told me late/he sayd/that there were duellynge in Oxenford two prestes bothe maystres of arte/of whome that one was quyck and coude putte hym self forth/And that other was a good symple preest/And soo it happed that the mayster that was perte and quyck was anone promoted to a benefyce or tweyne/and after to prebendys/and for to be a Dene of a grete prynces chappel/supposynge and wenynge that his felaw the symple preest shold neuer haue be promoted but be alwey an Annuel/or at the most a parrysshe preest/So after longe tyme that this worshipful man this dene came rydynge in to a good paryssh with a x or xij horses/lyke a prelate/and came in to the chirche of the sayd parysshe/and fond there this good symple man somtyme his felawe/whiche cam and welcomed hym lowely/And that other badde hym good morowe mayster Johan/and toke hym sleyghtly by the hand and axyd hym where he dwellyd/And the good man sayd/in this paryssh/how sayd he/are ye here a sowle preest or a paryssh preste/nay syr said he/for lack of a better though I be not able ne worthy J am parson and curate of this parysshe/and thenne that other aualed his bonet and said mayster parson I praye yow to be not displeasyd/J had supposed ye had not be benefyced/But mayster said he/J pray yow what is this benefyce worth to yow a yere/Forsothe sayd the good symple man/I wote neuer/for I make neuer accomptes therof/how wel J haue had hit four or fiue yere/And knowe ye not said he what it is worth/it shold seme a good benefyce/No forsothe sayd he/but I wote wel what it shalle be worth to me/ Why sayd he/what shalle hit be worth/Forsothe sayd he/ Yf J doo my trewe dylygẽce in the cure of my parysshẽs in prechyng and techynge/and doo my parte longynge to my cure/I shalle haue heuen therefore/And yf theyre sowles ben lost or ony of them by my defawte/J shall be punysshed therfore/And herof J am sure/And with that word the ryche dene was abasshed And thought he shold do the better/and take more hede to his cures and benefyces than he had done/ This was a good answere of a good preest and an honest/ And here with J fynysshe this book/translated and emprynted by me William Caxton at Westmynstre in thabbey/And fynysshed the xxvj daye of Marche the yere of oure lord MCCCClxxxiiij/And the fyrst yere of the regne of kyng Rychard the thyrdde

PREFACE TO CANTERBURY TALES

Grete thankes lawde and honour/ought to be gyuen vnto the clerkes/poetes/and historiographs that haue wreton many noble bokes of wysedom of the lyues/passiōs/& myracles of holy sayntes of hystoryes/of noble and famous Actes/and faittes/And of the cronycles sith the begynnyng of the creacion of the world/unto the present tyme/by whyche we ben dayly enformed and haue knowleche of many thynges/of whom we sholde not haue knowen/if they had not left to vs theyr monumentis wreton/Emong whom and inespecial tofore alle other we ought to gyue a synguler laude vnto that noble & grete philosopher Gefferey chaucer the whiche for his ornate wrytyng in our tongue maye well haue the name of a laureate poete/For tofore that he by hys labour embelysshed/ornated/and made fayre our englisshe/in thys Royame was had rude speche & Incongrue/as yet it appiereth by olde bookes/whyche at thys day ought not to haue place ne be compared emōg ne to his beauteuous volumes/and aournate writynges of whom he made many bokes and treatyces of many a noble historye as wel in metre as in ryme and prose/and them so craftyly made/that he cōprehended hys maters in short/quyck and hye sentences/eschewyng prolyxyte/castyng away the chaf of superfluyte/and shewing the pyked grayn of sentence/vtteryd by crafty and sugred eloquence/of whom emong all other of hys bokes/I purpose temprynte by the grace of god the book of the tales of cauntyrburye/in whyche I fynde many a noble hystorye/of euery astate and degre/Fyrst rehercyng the condiciōs/and tharraye of eche of them/as properly as possyble is to be sayd/And after theyr tales whyche ben of noblesse/wysedom/gentylesse/Myrthe/and also of veray holynesse and vertue/wherin he fynyssyth thys sayd booke/whyche book I haue dylygently ouersen and duly examyned to thende that it may be made accordyng vnto his owen making/For I fynde many of the sayd bookes/whyche wryters haue abrydged it and many thynges left out/And in som̃e place haue sette certayn versys/that he neuer made ne sette in hys booke/of whyche bookes so incorrecte was one brought to me vj yere passyd/whyche I supposed had ben veray true & correcte/And accordyng to the same I dyde do emprynte a certayn nombre of them/whyche anon were sold to many and dyuerse gentylmen/of whome one gentylman cam to me/and said that this book was not accordyng in many places vnto the book that Gefferey chaucer had made/To whom I answerd that I had made it accordynge to my copye/and by me was nothing added ne mynusshyd/Thenne he sayd he knewe a book whyche hys fader had and moche loued/that was very trewe/and accordynge vnto hys owen first book by hym made/and sayde more yf I wold emprynte it agayn he wold gete me the same book for a copye/how be it he wyst wel/that hys fader wold not gladly departe fro it/To whom I said/in caas that he coude gete me such a book trewe and correcte/yet I wold ones endeuoyre me to emprynte it agayn/for to satysfye thauctour/where as to fore by ygnoraũce I erryd in hurtyng and dyffaming his book in dyuerce places in settyng som̃e thynges that he neuer sayd ne made/and leuynge out many thynges that he made whyche ben requysite to be sette in it/ And thus we fyll at accord/and he ful gentylly gate of hys fader the said book/and delyuerd it to me/by whyche I haue corrected my book/as here after alle alonge by thayde of almyghty god shal folowe/whom I humbly beseche to gyue me grace and ayde to acheyue/and accomplysshe/to hys lawde honour and glorye/and that alle ye that shal in thys book rede or heere/wyll of your charyte emong your dedes of mercy/ remembre the sowle of the sayd Gefferey chaucer first auctour/ and maker of thys book/And also that alle we that shal see and rede therin/may so take and vnderstõde the good and vertuous tales/that it may so prouffyte/vnto the helthe of our sowles/that after thys short and transitorye lyf we may come to euerlastyng lyf in heuen/Amen

By Wylliam Caxton

THE BOOK OF FAME

Epilogue.

J fynde nomore of this werke to fore sayd/For as fer as I can vnderstõde/This noble man Gefferey Chaucer fynnyshed at the sayd conclusion of the metyng of lesyng and sothsawe/

where as yet they ben chekked and maye not departe/whyche werke as me semeth is craftyly made/and dygne to be wreton & knowen/For he towchyth in it ryght grete wysedom & subtyll vnderstondyng/And so in alle hys werkys he excellyth in myn oppynyon alle other wryters in our Englyssh/ For he wrytteth no voyde wordes/but alle hys mater is ful of hye and quycke sentence/to whom ought to be gyuen laude and preysyng for hys noble makyng and wrytyng/For of hym alle other haue borowed syth and taken in alle theyr wel sayeng and wrytyng/And I humbly beseche & praye you emonge your prayers/to remembre hys soule/on whyche / and on alle crysten soulis/I beseche almyghty god to haue mercy Amen

Emprynted by wyllyam Caxton

ORDER OF CHIVALRY

Here endeth the book of thordre of chyualry/whiche book is translated oute of Frensshe in to Englysshe at a requeste of a gentyl and noble esquyer by me William Caxton dwellynge in Westmynstre besyde london in the most best wyse that god hath suffred me/and accordynge to the copye that the sayd squyer delyuerd to me/whiche book is not requysyte to euery comyn man to haue/but to noble gentylmen that by their vertu entende to come & entre in the noble ordre of chyualry/ the whiche in these late dayes hath ben vsed accordyng to this booke here to fore wreton but forgeten/and thexcersytees of chyualry/not vsed/honoured/ne excercysed/as hit hath ben in auncyent tyme/at whiche tyme the noble actes of the knyghtes of Englond that vsed chyualry were renomed thurgh the vnyuersal world/as for to speke to fore thyncarnacion of Jhesu Chryste/where were euer ony lyke to brenius and belynus that from the grete Brytayne now called Englond unto Rome & ferre beyond conquered many Royammes and londes/ whos noble actes remayne in thold hystoryes of the Romayns/ And syth the Jncarnacion of oure lord/byhold that noble kyng of Brytayne kyng Arthur with al the noble knyȝtes of the roũd table/whos noble actes & noble chyualry of his knyghtes/ occupye soo many large volumes/that is a world/or as thyng incredyble to byleue/O ye knyghtes of Englond where is the custume and vsage of noble chyualry that was vsed in tho dayes/what do ye now/but go to the baynes & playe atte dyse And some not wel aduysed vse not honest and good rule ageyn alle ordre of knyghthode/leue this/leue it and rede the noble volumes of saynt graal of lancelot/of galaad/of Trystram/of perse forest/of percyual/of gawayn/& many mo/Ther shalle ye see manhode/curtosye & gentylnesse/And loke in latter dayes of the noble actes syth the cõquest/as in kyng Rychard dayes cuer du lyon/Edward the fyrste/and the thyrd/and his noble sones/Syre Robert knolles/syr Johan hawkwode/Syr Johan chaũdos/& Syre gualtier Manny rede froissart/And also behold that vyctoryous and noble kynge harry the fyfthe/ and the capytayns vnder hym his noble bretheren/Therle of Salysbury Montagu/and many other whoos names shyne gloryously by their vertuous noblesse & actes that they did in thonour of thordre of chyualry/Allas what doo ye/but slepe & take ease/and ar al disordred fro chyualry/J wold demaunde a question yf J shold not displease/how many knyghtes ben ther now in Englond/that haue thuse and thexcercyse of a knyghte/that is to wete/that he knoweth his hors/& his hors hym/that is to saye/he beynge redy at a poynt to haue al thynge that longeth to a knyght/an hors that is accordyng and broken after his hand/his armures and harnoys mete and syttyng/& so forth/et cetera/J suppose and a due serche shold be made/ther shold be many founden that lacke/the more pyte is/I wold it pleasyd oure souerayne lord that twyes or thryes in a yere/or at the lest ones he wold do crye Justes of pees/to thende that euery knyght shold haue hors and harneys/and also the vse and craft of a knyght/and also to tornoye one ageynste one/or ij ageynst ij/And the best to haue a prys/a dyamond or Jewel/suche as shold please the prynce/This shold cause gentylmen to resorte to thauncyent custõmes of chyualry to grete fame and renõmee/And also to be alwey redy to serue/theyr prynce whan he shalle calle them/or haue nede/Thenne late euery man that is come of noble blood and entendeth to come to the noble ordre of chyualry/rede this lytyl book/and doo therafter/in kepyng the lore and commaundements therin comprysed/And thenne J doubte not he shall atteyne to thordre of chyualry/et cetera/ And thus thys lytyl book J presente to my redoubted naturel and most dradde souerayne lord kyng Rychard kyng of Englond and of Fraunce/to thende/that he commaunde this book to be had and redde vnto other yong lordes knyghtes and gentylmen within this royame/that the noble ordre of chyualrye be herafter better vsed & honoured than hit hath ben in late dayes passed/And herin he shalle do a noble & vertuouse dede/And J shalle pray almyȝty god for his long lyf & prosperous welfare/& that he may haue victory of al his enemyes/and after this short & transitory lyf to haue euerlastyng lyf in heuen/where as is Joye and blysse world without end Amen/

THE CURIAL

Here foloweth the copye of a lettre which maistre Alayn Charetier wrote to hys brother/whyche desired to come dwelle in Court/in whyche he reherseth many myseryes & wretchednesses therin vsed/For taduyse hym not to entre in to it/ leste he after repente/like as hier after folowe/and late translated out of frenshe in to englysshe/whyche Copye was delyuerid to me by a noble and vertuous Erle/At whos Instaunce & requeste I haue reduced it in to Englyssh.

GOWER: CONFESSIO AMANTIS

This book is intituled confessio amantis/that is to saye in englysshe the confessyon of the louer maad and compyled by Johan Gower squyr borne in walys in the tyme of kynd richard the second which book treteth how he was confessyd to Genyus preest of venus upon the causes of loue in his fyue wyttes and seuen dedely synnes as in thys sayd book al alonge appyereth/and bycause there had been comprysed therin dyvers hystoryes and fables towchyng euery matere/I haue ordeyned a table here folowyng of al such hystoryes and fables/where and in what book and leef they stande in as here after foloweth

Fyrst the prologue how Johan gower in the xvi yere of kyng rychard the second began to make thys book and dyrected to harry of lancastre thenne erle of derby

Enprynted at Westmestre by me willyam Caxton and fynysshed the ij day of Septembre the fyrst yere of the regne of kyng Richard the thyrd/the yere of our lord a thousand/CCCC/lxxxxiij/

MORTE DARTHUR

After that I had accomplysshed and fynysshed dyuers hystoryes as wel of contemplacyon as of other hystoryal and worldly actes of grete conquerours & prynces/And also certeyn bookes of ensaumples and doctryne/Many noble and dyuers gentylmen of thys royame of Englond camen and demaunded me many and oftymes/wherfore that I haue not do made & enprynte the noble hystorye of the saynt greal/and of the moost renomed crysten Kyng/Fyrst and chyef of the thre best crysten and worthy/kyng Arthur/whyche ought moost to be remembred emonge vs englysshe men tofore al other crysten kynges/For it is notoyrly knowen thorugh the vnyuersal world/that there been ix worthy & the best that euer were/That is to wete thre paynyms/thre Jewes and thre crysten men/As for the paynyms they were to fore the Jncarnacyon of Cryst/whiche were named/the fyrst Hector of Troye/of whome thystorye is comen bothe in balade and in prose/The second Alysaunder the grete/& the thyrd Julyus Cezar Emperour of Rome of whome thystoryes ben wel know and had/And as for the thre Jewes whyche also were tofore thyncarnacyon of our lord of whome the fyrst was Duc Josue whyche brought the chyldren of Israhel in to the londe of byheste/the second Dauyd kyng of Jherusalem/& the thyrd Judas Machabeus of these thre the byble reherceth al theyr noble hystoryes & actes/And sythe the sayd Jncarnacyon haue ben thre noble crysten men stalled and admytted thorugh the vnyuersal world in to the nombre of the ix beste & worthy/of whome was fyrst the noble Arthur/whos noble actes I purpose to wryte in thys present book here folowyng/The second was Charlemayn or Charles the grete/of whome thystorye is had in many places bothe in frensshe and in englysshe/and the thyrd and last was Godefray of boloyn/of whos Actes & lyf I made a book vnto thexcellent prynce and kyng of noble memorye kynge Edward the fourth/The sayd noble Jentylmen Jnstantly requyred me tenprynte thystorye of the sayd noble kyng and conquerour kyng Arthur/and of his knyghtes wyth thystorye of the saynt greal/and of the deth and endyng of the sayd Arthur/Affermyng that I ouȝt rather tenprynte his actes and noble feates/than of godefroye of boloyne/or ony of the other eyght/consyderyng that he was a man borne wythin this royame and kyng and Emperour of the same/And that there ben in frensshe dyuers and many noble volumes of his actes/and also of his knyghtes/To whome J answerd/that dyuers men holde opynyon that there was no suche Arthur/and that alle suche bookes as been maad of hym/ben but fayned and fables/bycause that somme cronycles make of hym no mencyon nor remembre hym no thynge ne of his knyghtes/wherto they answerd/and one in specyal sayd/that in hym that shold say or thynke that there was neuer suche a kyng callyd Arthur/myght wel be aretted grete folye and blyndnesse/For he sayd that there were many euydences of the contrarye/Fyrst ye may see his sepulture in the monastrye of Glastyngburye/And also in polycronycon in the fyfth book the syxte chappytre/and in the seuenth book the xxiii chappytre/where his body was buryed and after founden and translated in to the sayd monasterye/ye shall se also in thystorye of bochas in his book de casu principum/parte of his noble actes/and also of his falle/Also galfrydus in his brutysshe book recounteth his lyf/and in dyuers places of Englond/many remembraunces ben yet of hym and shall remayne perpetuelly/and also of his knyghtes/Fyrst in the abbey of westmestre at saynt Edwardes shryne remayneth the prynte of his seal in reed waxe closed in berylle/Jn whych is wryton Patricius Arthurus/Britannie/Gallie/Germanie/Dacie/Jmperator/Item in the castel of douer ye may see Gauwaynes skulle/& Cradoks mantel. At wynchester the ronnde table/in other places Launcelottes swerde and many other thynges/Thenne al these thynges consydered there can no man resonably gaynsaye but there was a kyng of thys lande named Arthur/For in al places crysten and hethen he is reputed and taken for one of the ix worthy/And the fyrst of the thre crysten men/And also he is more spoken of beyonde the see moo bookes made of his noble actes than there be in englond as wel in duche ytalyan spanysshe and grekysshe as in frensshe/And yet of record remayne in wytnesse of hym in wales in the toune of Camelot the grete stones & merueyllous werkes of yron lyeng vnder the grounde and ryal vauts which dyuers now lyuyng haue seen/wherfor it is a merueyl why he is no more renomed in his owne contreye/ sauf onelye it accordeth to the word of god/whyche sayth that no man is accept for a prophete in his owne contreye/Theñe al these thynges foresayd aledged J coude not wel denye/but that there was suche a noble kyng named arthur/and reputed one of the ix worthy/& fyrst & chyef of the crysten men/& many noble volumes be made of hym & of his noble knyghtes in frensshe which I haue seen & redde beyonde the see/which been not had in our maternal tongue/but in walsshe ben many & also in frensshe/& somme in englysshe but nowher nygh alle/wherfore suche as haue late ben drawne oute bryefly in to englysshe/I haue after the symple connynge that god hath sente to me/vnder the fauour and correctyon of al noble lordes and gentylmen enprysed to enprynte a book of the noble hystoryes of the sayd kynge Arthur/and of certeyn of his knyghtes after a copye vnto me delyuerd/whyche copye Syr Thomas Malorye dyd take oute of certayn bookes of frensshe and reduced it in to englysshe/And I accordyng to my copye haue doon sette it in enprynte/to the entente that noble men may see and lerne the noble actes of chiualrye/the Jentyl and vertuous dedes that somme knyghtes vsed in tho dayes/by whyche they came to honour/and how they that were vycious were punysshed and ofte put to shame and rebuke/humbly besechyng al noble lordes and ladyes and al other estates of what estate or degre they been of/that shal see and rede in this sayd book and werke/that they take the good and honest actes in their remembraunce/and to folowe the same/wherin they shalle fynde many joyous and playsaunt hystoryes/and noble & renomed actes of humanyte/gentylnesse and chyualryes/For herin may be seen noble chiualrye/Curtoyse/ Humanyte / frendlynesse / hardynesse / loue / frendshyppe/ Cowardyse/Murdre / hate / vertue / and synne/Doo after the good and leue the euyll/and it shal brynge you to good fame and renommee/And for to passe the tyme thys book shal be plesaunte to rede in/but/for to gyue fayth and beleue that al is trewe that is conteyned herin/ye be at your liberte but al is wryton for our doctryne/and for to beware that we falle not to vyce ne synne/but texcersyse and folow vertu/by whyche we may come and atteyne to good fame and renomme in thys lyf/and after thys shorte and transytorye lyf to come vnto euerlastyng blysse in heuen/the whyche he graunte vs that reygneth in heuen the blessyd Trynyte Amen/

Thenne to procede forth in thys sayd book/whyche J dyrecte vnto alle noble prynces/lordes and ladyes/gentylmen or gentylwymmen that desyre to rede or here redde of the noble and Joyous hystorye of the grete conquerour and excellent kyng. Kyng Arthur/sometyme kyng of thys noble royalme thenne callyd brytaygne/J wyllyam Caxton symple persone present thys book folowyng/whyche J haue enprysed tenprynte/And treateth of the noble actes/feates of armes of chyualrye/prowesse/hardynesse/humanyte/loue/curtosye/and veray gentylnesse/wyth many wonderful hystoryes and aduentures/And for to vnderstonde bryefly the contente of this volume/I haue deuyded it in to xxi bookes/and euery book chapytred as hereafter shal by goddes grace folowe/The fyrst book shal treate how Vther pendragon gate the noble conquerour Kyng Arthur and conteyneth xxviij chappytres/The second book treateth of Balyn the noble knyght and conteyneth xix chappytres/The thyrd book treateth of the maryage of Kyng Arthur to quene gueneuer wyth other maters and conteyneth fyftene chappytres/The fourth book how Merlyn was assotted/and of warre maad to kyng Arthur/and conteyneth xxix chappytres/The fyfthe book treateth of the conqueste of Lucius themperour and conteyneth xij chappytres/The syxthe book treateth of Syr Launcelot and Syr Lyonel and meruayllous aduentures and conteyneth xviij chappytres/The seuenth book treateth of a noble knyght called syr Gareth and named by sir Kaye Beaumayns and conteyneth xxxvj chapytres/The eyght book treateth of the byrthe of Syr Trystam the noble knyght and of his actes/and conteyneth xlj chapytres/The ix book treateth of a knyght named by Syr kaye le cote male taylle and also of Syr Trystram and conteyneth xliiij chapytres/The x book treateth of syr Trystram & other meruayllous aduentures and conteyneth lxxxiij chappyters/The xj book treateth of syr Launcelot and syr Galahad and conteyneth xiiij chappytres/The xij book treateth of syr Launcelot and his madnesse and conteyneth xiiij chappytres/The xiij book treateth how galahad came fyrst to kyng Arthurs courte and the quest how the sangreall was begonne and conteyneth xx chappytres/The xiiij book treateth of the queste of the sangreal & conteyneth x chappytres/The xv book treateth of syr launcelot & conteyneth vj chappytres/The xvj book treateth of Syr Bors & syr Lyonel his brother and conteyneth xvij chapytres/The xvij book treateth of the sangreal and conteyneth xxiij chappytres/The xviij book treateth of syr Launcelot and the quene and conteyneth xxv chappytres/The xix book treateth of quene Gueneuer and Launcelot and conteyneth xxij chapytres/The xx book treateth of the pyteous deth of Arthur and conteyneth xxij chapytres/The xxj book treateth of his last departyng/and how syr Launcelot came to reuenge his dethe and conteyneth xiij chapytres/The somme is xxj bookes whyche conteyne the somme of fyue hondred & vij chapytres as more playnly shal folowe herafter/

CHARLES THE GRETE

Saynt Poul doctour of veryte sayth to us that al thynges that ben reduced by wrytyng/ben wryton to our doctryne/and Boece maketh mencion that the helthe of euery persone procedeth dyuercely/Thenne sythe it is soo that the cristen feyth is affermed and corrobered by the doctours of holy chyrche/Neuertheles the thynges passed dyuersley reduced to remembraunce/engendre in vs correctiõ of vnlauful lyf For the werkes of the auncient and olde peple ben for to gyue to vs ensaũple to lyue in good & vertuous operacions digne & worthy of helth in folowyng the good/and eschewyng the euyl And also in recountyng of hye hystoryes/the comune vnderstondyng is better to the ymagnacion local than to symple auctoryte/to which it is submysed/J saye this gladly/For oftymes J haue been excyted of the venerable man messire henry bolomyer chanõne of lausãne for to reduce for his playsyr somme hystoryes as wel in latyn & in romaũce as in other facion wryton/that is to say of the ryght puyssaunt/vertuous/and noble charles the grete/kyng of frãce and emperour of Rome/Sone of the grete Pepyn/And of his prynces & barons/As Rolland Olyuer/and other/touchyng somme werkes haultayne doon and cõmysed by their grete strength & ryght ardaunt courage/to the exaltacyon of the crysten fayth and to the confusyon of the hethen sarazyns and myscreaunts whiche is a werk wel contemplatyf for to lyue wel/And bycause the sayd henry Bolomyer hath seen of thys mater/and the hystoryes dysioyned wyth oute ordre/ therfore at his request after the capacyte of my lytel entendement/And after thystoryes and mater that I haue founden I haue ordeyned this book folowyng/And it myght soo haue ben that yf I had ben more largely enformed and al playn I had better made it/For J haue not sayd ony matere/but I haue therof ben enformed/Fyrst by an autentyke book named myrrour hystoryal/as by the canõnes and somme other bookes whiche make mencyon of the werke folowyng/And bycause I may haue a lytel parte of honourable foũdemẽnt I shall touche of the fyrst cristen kyng of fraũce For the moste parte of this book is made to thonour of the frẽssh men/and for prouffyte of euery man/and after the desyre of the redar and herer/there shalle be founden in the table all playne the mater of whyche the persone shal haue desyre to here or rede/ wythoute grete atedyacyon/by the playsyr of god to whome I submytte al myn entẽte to write no thyng that ought to be blamed/ne but that it be to the helthe & sauacion of euery persone/

Thenne for as moche I late had fynysshed in enprynte the book of the noble & vyctoryous kyng Arthur fyrst of the thre moost noble & worthy of crysten kynges/and also tofore had reduced into englisshe the noble hystorye & lyf of Godefroy of boloyn kyng of Iherusalem/last of the said iij worthy Somme persones of noble estate and degree haue desyred me to reduce thystorye and lyf of the noble and crysten prynce Charles the grete kyng of fraunce & emperour of Rome/the second of the thre worthy/to thende that thystoryes/actes/& lyues may be had in our maternal tongue lyke as they be in latyn or in frensshe/For the moost quantyte of the people vnder stonde not latyn ne frensshe here in this noble royame of englond/ And for to satysfye the desyre & requeste of my good synguler fordes & specyal maysters and frendes I haue enprysed and concluded in myself to reduce this sayd book in to our englysshe/as all alonge and playnely ye may rede/here/and see in thys book here folowyng/besechyng al them that shal fynde faute in the same to correcte and amende it/And also to pardone me of the rude & symple reducyng/and though so be there be no gaye termes/ne subtyl ne newe eloquence/yet I hope that it shal be vnderstonden & to that entente I haue specyally reduced it/after the symple connyng that god hath lente to me/wherof I humbly & wyth al my herte thanke hym/& also am bounden to praye for my fader and moders soules/that in my youthe sette me to scole/by whyche by the suffraunce of god I gete my lyuyng I hope truly And that I may so do & contynue I byseche hym to graũte me of his grace/and so to laboure and occupye my self vertuously that I may come out of dette & dedely synne/that after this lyf I may come to hys blysse in heuen Amen/

And by cause J Wylliam Caxton was desyred & requyred by a good and synguler frend of myn/Maister wylliam daubeney/one of the tresorers of the Iewellys of the noble & moost crysten kyng/our naturel and souerayn lord late of noble memorye kyng Edward the fourth on whos soule Ihesu haue mercy To reduce al these sayd hystoryes in to our englysshe tongue I haue put me in deuoyr to translate thys sayd book as ye heretofore may see al a longe and playn/prayeng alle them that shal rede/see or here it/to pardon me of thys symple & rude translacyon and reducyng/bysechyng theym that shal fynde faute to correcte it/& in so doyng they shal deserue thankynges/& I shal praye god for them/who brynge them and me/after this short and transytorye lyf to euerlastyng blysse Amen/the whyche werke was fynysshed in the reducyng of hit in to englysshe the xviij day of Iuyn the second yere of kyng Rychard the thyrd/And the yere of our lord MCCCClxxxv/And enprynted the fyrst day of decembre the same yere of our lord & the fyrst yere of kyng Harry the seuenth/

Explicit ꝑ william Caxton.

BOOK OF GOOD MANNERS

Whan I consydere the condycions & maners of the comyn people whiche without enformacion & lernyng ben rude and not manerd lyke vnto beestis brute accordyng to an olde prouerbe. he that is not manerd is no man . for maners make man . Thenne it is requesite and necessary that euery man vse good & vertuous maners . And to thende that euery man shold haue knowleche of good maners/An honest man/& a specyal frence of myn a Mercer of london named williã praat which late departed out of this lyf on whos soule god haue mercy/not longe tofore his deth delyuered to me in frenshe a lytel book named the book of good maners whiche book is of auctoryte for as moche as there is no thyng sayd therin but for the moost parte it is aledged by scrypture of the byble. or ellis by sayeng of holy sayntes/doctours/philosophres . & poetes . and desyred me Instantly to translate it in to englyssh our maternal tonge to thende that it myght be had and vsed emonge the people for thamendement of their maners . and to thencreace of vertuous lyuyng. Thēne I at the request & desyre of hym whyche was my synguler frende/and of old knowlege haue put my self in deuoyr for taccomplysshe his desyre/& haue after the lytel connyng that god hath lent me translated out of frenshe in to our englyssh this sayd book of good maners . besechyng almyghty god that it may prouffyte bothe the redars & herers therof/For that is thentent of hym that was fyrst cause that brouȝt the boke to my hande . and also of me that haue accomplysshed it . prayeng al them that shal rede & here it to correcte where as they fynde faulte and to holde me excused of the rude & vnparfyght englysh . And I beseche almyghty god that it so may be vnderstonden that al they that shal rede or here it/that they may the better lyue in this present lyf that after this lyf they & I may come to the euerlastyng lyf in heuen where as is Ioye and blysse perdurable Amen.

CORDYALE

EPILOGUE.

This book is thus translated out of frenshe in to our maternal tongue by the noble and vertuouse lord ANTHOINE Erle Ryuiers/Lord Scales & of the Isle of wight. Defenseur and directeur of the causes apostolique for our holy fader the Pope in this Royame of Englonde. Vncle and gouernour to my lorde prince of wales. which book was deliuered to me WILLIAM CAXTON by my saide noble lorde Ryuiers on the day of purificacion of our blissid lady/fallyng the tewsday the secunde day of the moneth of feuerer. Jn the yeer of our lord .M.CCCClxxviij for to be enprinted/and so multiplied to goo abrood emonge the peple/that therby more surely myght be remembred the four last thingis vndoubtedly comyng. And it is to be noted that sythen the tyme of the grete tribulacion and aduersite of my saide lord/he hath been ful vertuously occupied as in goyng of pilgremagis to SEINT JAMES IN GALICE. to ROME. to SEINT BARTYLMEW. to SEINT ANDREW. to SEINT MATHEW. in the ROYALME OF NAPLES. and to SEINT NICOLAS DE BAR IN PUYLE. and other diuerse holy places. Also hath procured and goten of our holy fader the Pope a greet and a large Indulgence and grace vnto the chapel of our lady of the piewe by SEINT STEPHENS AT WESTMESTRE for the relief & helpe of christen sowles passed out of this transitorie world. whiche grace is of like vertue to thindulgence of SCALA CELI. And notwithstonding the greet labours & charges y^t he hath had in the seruice of the kyng & of my said lord prince/as wel in wales in Englonde. which hath be to him no litle thought & besines bothe in spirite and in body/as the fruit thereof experimently sheweth. yet ouer that tenriche his vertuous disposicion/he hath put him in deuoyr at all tymes when he might haue a leyser. whiche was but startemele to translate diuerse bookes out of frensh in to english . Emong other passid thurgh myñ honde the booke of the wise sayinges or dictes of philosophers. & the wise and holsom̃ ꝑuerbis of xpristine of pyse set in metre. Ouer that hath made diuerse balades ayenst the seuen dedely synnes. Furthermore it semeth that he conceiueth wel the mutabilite and the vnstablenes of this present lyf. and that he desireth with a greet zele and spirityell loue our goostly helpe and perpetuel saluacion. And that we shal abhorre and vtterly forsake thabhominable and dampnable synnes. whiche comunely be vsed now a dayes/ as Pride/periurye/terrible swering thefte/murdre/and many other. Wherfore he took vpon hym the translating of this present werke named CORDYALE/trusting that bothe the reders and the herers therof shold knowe them self hereafter the better/and amende thair lyuyng or they departe and lose this tyme of grace to the recouure of their saluacion. Whiche Translating in my Iugement is a noble & meritorious dede. Wherfor he is worthy to be greetly com̃ended. and also singulerly remembred with out goode prayers. For certaynly as well the reders as the herers well conceyuyng in their hertes the forsayd foure last thinges may therby greetly be prouoqued and called from sinne to the greet & plentiouse mercy of our blissid saueour/whiche mercy is aboue all his werkis. And noman beyng contrite and confessed nedeth to fere thobteyning therof/as in the preface of my saide lordes booke made by hym more playnly it appereth Theñe in obeying and folowyng my said lordes comandement. In whiche I am bounden so to do. for the manifolde benefetes and large rewardes of hym had and receyued of me vndeseruid. J haue put me in deuoyr taccomplisshe his saide desire and comaũdement/whom I beseche almighty god to kepe and mayntene in his vertuous and laudable actes and werkis. And sende hym thaccomplisshment of his noble and ioyous desirs and playsirs in this worlde And after this short daungerous and transitory lyf euerlasting permanence in heuen Amen. Whiche werke present I begañ the morn after the saide Purificacion of our blissid Lady. Whiche was the the daye of Seint Blase Bisshop and Martir. And fiinsshed on the euen of thannunciacion of our said bilissid Lady fallyng on the wednesday the xxiiij daye of Marche. In the xix yeer of kyng Edwarde the fourthe

ROYAL BOOK

Whan J remembre and take hede of the conuersacion of vs that lyue in this wretched lyf. in which is no surete ne stable abydyng. And also the contynuel besynes of euery man. how he is occupyed and dayly laboureth to bylde and edefye as though theyr habytacion and dwellyng here/were permanent and shold euer endure. & also practyse how they may gete temporalle possessyons. goodes and rychesses. of whyche they are neuer contente ne satysfyed as for the moost partye. but contynuelly entende and laboure by many subtyl meanes how they may encreace theyr sayd possessyons and richesses for to come and attayne to worldly honour and estate. In whiche they wene be veray felycyte and blessydnes/and whan I haue wel ouerseen & examyned these foresayd thynges and lyf. J fynde nothyng in them but vanyte of vanytees and all vanyte & yet I merueyelle moche of them that ben lerned wyse & noble men in the lawe. that notwithstondyng their rychesses. & sure lyuyng as wel in the spirituelte as in the temporalte contynuelly laboure to be enhaunced & promoted to hye dygnytees and offyces. as though therin were perpetuel felycyte. Jn whyche ye may see at eye that al is but vanyte. & that mẽ repute for wysest & gretest aboute prynces in a moment be ouerthrowen & brought to nought. Not withstondyng for the moost parte. they of the spyrytuelte & also of the temporalte entende more to gete. worldly honours rychesses & possessyons for to satisfye the appetyte of their inordynate desyre here in this transytorye lyf/which anone & hastely shal departe fro the corruptyble body. thã they do for theternal lyf which shal euer endure in Ioye or in payne. Thẽne to thende that euery man resonable remẽbre hym self that he is mortal. & shal withoute fayle departe out of this lyf hastely & sone. & ought while he is here lyuyng to purueye & ordeyne for the perpetuel lyf to come/& so to lyue accordyng to the lawe & comandements of our lord & occupye hym self in vertuous operacyons and werkes. in eschewyng al vices & synnes & al the braũches of thẽ. that they may after this short & trãsytorye lyf attayne & com to the euerlastyng lyf in heuen/J purpose & attende by the suffraunce of almyghty god to trãslate a book late delyuered to me & reduce it out of frensshe in to our comyn englysshe tonge. in whyche euery man may be enformed how he ouȝt to kepe the lawe & cõmaudemẽts of god. to folowe vertu & flee and eschewe vyces & to pourueye & ordeyne for hym spirituel rychesses in heuen ꝑpetuel & permanent/which book was made in frensshe atte requeste of Phelip le bele kyng of fraũce in the yere of thyncarnacion of our lord MCClxxix. & reduced in to englisshe at the request & specyal desyre of a synguler frende of myn a mercer of lõden the yere of our sayd lord/MiiiiClxxxiiij. which book is entytled & named in frensshe. le lyure royal. whiche is to say in englisshe. the ryal book. or a book for a kyng. in whiche book ben comprysed the x comandemẽts of our lord. the xii artycles of the fayth/the vii dedely synnes with their braũches the vii petycions of the pater noster. the seuen yeftes of the holy ghoost. the seuen vertues and many other holy thynges and maters good & prouffytable for the wele of mañes soule. Thenne J exhorte & desyre euery mã that entendeth to the prouffyt & saluacyon of his soule/to ouersee this sayd book/in whiche he shal fynde good & prouffytable doctryne by which he may the rather attayne to come to euerlastyng blysse. & alwaye what that is wryton is vnder correctyon of lerned men/humbly besechyng them to correcte & amende where as is ony defaute. & so doyng they shal doo a merytory dede. For as nyghe as god hath gyuen me connyng I haue folowed the copye as nughe as I can. & J beseche almyghty god that this sayd werk may prouffyte the redars. & that is the special cause that it is made fore/that knoweth god to whome noo thyng is hyd/whyche gyue us grace so to lyue vertuously in this short lyf. that after this lyf we may come to his euerlastyng blysse in heuen amẽ

Epilogue.

This book was compyled & made atte requeste of kyng Phelyp of Fraunce in the yere of thyncarnacyon of our lord/ M.CC.lxxix. & translated or reduced out of frensshe in to englysshe by me wyllyam Caxton. atte requeste of a worshipful marchaunt & mercer of london. whyche Instauntly requyred me to reduce it for the wele of alle them that shal rede or here it. as for a specyal book to knowe al vyces & braũches of them. & also al vertues by whyche wel vnderstonden & seen may dyrecte a persone to euerlastyng blysse, whyche book is callyd in frensshe. le liure Royal. that is to say the ryal book. or a book for a kyng. For the holy scrypture calleth euery man a kyng whiche wysely and parfytly can gouerne and dyrecte hym self after vertu . & this book sheweth & enseygneth it so subtylly . so shortly. so perceyuyngly & so parfyghtly. that for the short comprehencion of the noble clergye & of the right grete substaũce which is comprysed therin. Jt may & ought to be called wel by ryght and quycke reason aboue al other bookes in frensshe or in englysshe. the book ryal or the book for a kyng. & also by cause it was made & ordeyned atte request of that ryght noble kyng Phelip le bele kynge of Fraunce. ought it to be called Ryall/as tofore is sayd. whiche translacion or reducyng oute of frensshe in to englysshe was acheyued . fynysshed & accomplysshed the xiij day of Septembre in the yere of thyncarnacyon of our lord. M/CCCC.lxxxiiij/And in the second yere of the Regne of Kyng Rychard the thyrd/

FAYTS OF ARMS

Here begynneth the book of fayttes of armes & of Chyualrye/ And the first chapytre is the prologue/in whiche xp̃ryttyne of pyse excuseth hir self to haue dar enterpryse to speke of so hye matere as is conteyned in this sayd book

EPILOGUE.

Thus endeth this boke whiche xp̃ryne of pyse made & drewe out of the boke named vegecius de re militari & out of tharbre of bataylles wyth many other thynges sett in to the same requisite to werre & batailles whiche boke beyng in frẽshe was delyuered to me willm Caxton by the most chrysten kynge & redoubted prynce my naturel & souerayn lord kyng henry the /vii/ kyng of englond & of fraũce in his palais of westmestre the /xxiij/ day of Ianyuere the /iiii/ yere of his regne & desired & wylled me to translate this said boke & reduce it in to our english & naturel tonge/& to put it in enprynte to thende that euery gentylman born to armes and all manere men of werre captayns/souldiours/vytayllers & all other shold haue knowlege how they ought to behaue theym in the fayttes of warre & of bataylles/and so delyuered me the said book thẽne my lord therle of Oxenford awaytĩg on his said grace/ whiche volume conteynyng four bokes/I receyued of his said grace & accordĩg to his desire whiche to me I repute a comandemẽt/& verili glad to obeye/& after the lityl cõnyng that god hath lente me I haue endeuoyrd me to the vtterest of my power to fulfylle & accõmplisshe his desire & comaundement/as wel to reduce it in to englyshe/as to put it in enprĩte/ to thende that it may come to the sight & knowlege of euery gentylman & man of warre/& for certayn in myn oppinyon it is as necessary a boke & as requysite/as ony may be for euery estate hye & lowe that entende to the fayttes of warre whether it be in bataylles sieges/rescowse/& all other fayttes subtyltees & remedyes for mischieues/Whiche translacyon was finysshed the /viij/ day Iuyll the sayd yere & enprynted the /xiiij/ day of Iuyll next folowyng & ful fynyshed/thẽne syth I haue obeyed his most dredeful comaũdemet/I hũbly beseche his most exellent & bounteuous hyenes to pardone me of this symple & rude translacion wherin be no curyous ne gaye termes of rethoryk/but I hope to almighti god that it shal be entendyble & vnderstanden to euery man/& also that it shal not moche varye in sẽtence fro the copye receyued of my said souerayn lord/And where I haue erryd or made defaulte I beseche them that fynde suche to correcte it & so dooyng I shal praye for them/& yf ther be ony thĩg therin to his pleasir/ I am glad & thinke my labour wel enployed for to haue the name to be one of the litel seruantes to the hiest & most christen kyng & prince of the world/whom I byseche almyghty god to preserue/kepe/& contynue in his noble & most redoubted enterpryses as wel in bretayn/flaũdres & other placis that he may haue victorie honour/& renõmee to his perpetual glorye/ For I haue not herd ne redde that ony prynce hath subdued his subgettis with lasse hurte &c and also holpen his neighbours & frendis out of this londe/In whyche hye enterprises I byseche almyghty god that he may remayne alleway vyctoryous/ And dayly encrease fro vertu to vertue & fro better to better to his laude & honour in this present lyf/that after this short & transitorye lyf/he may atteyne to euerlastyng lyf in heuen/ Whiche god graunte to hym and to alle his lyege peple Amen/

Per Caxton

BLANCHARDIN AND EGLANTYNE

Unto the right noble puyssaũt & excellẽt pryncesse my redoubted lady my lady Margarete duchesse of Somercete/ Moder vnto our naturel & souerayn lord and most Crysten kynge henry y^{e} seuenth by the grace of god kyng of englonde & of ffraũce lord of yrelonde &c. I wyllyam caxton his most Indygne humble subgette and lytil seruaũt presente this lytyl book vnto the noble grace of my sayd lady whiche boke I late receyued in frenshe from her good grace and her cõmaundement wyth alle/For to reduce & translate it in to our maternal & englysh tonge/whiche boke I had longe to fore solde to my sayd lady and knewe wel that the storye of hit was honeste & Joyefull to all vertuouse yong noble gentylmen and wymmẽ for to rede therin as for their passe tyme for vnder correction in my Jugement/it is as requesyte other whyle to rede in Auncyent hystoryes of noble fayttes & valiaũt actes of armes & warre whiche haue ben achyeued in olde tyme of many noble prynces. lordes & knyghtes/as well for to see & knowe their walyaũtnes for to stande in the specyal grace & loue of their ladyes And in lykewyse for gentyl yonge ladyes & damoysellys for to lerne to be stedfaste & constaũt in their parte to theym that they ones haue promysed and agreed to suche as haue putte their lyues ofte in Jeopardye for to playse theym to stande in grace. As it is to occupye theym and studye ouer moche in bokes of contemplacion. Wherfore at thynstaũce and requeste of my sayd lady. whiche I repute as for a cõmaũdemente I haue reduced this sayd boke out of frenshe in to our englyshe : whiche boke specyfyth of the noble actes and fayttes of warre achyeued by a noble and victorious prynce named Blanchardin sone vnto the kynge Fryse/for the loue of a noble pryncesse callyd Eglantyne otherwyse named in frensche lorguylleuse damours whiche is as moche to saye in englyshe. as the proude lady of loue quene of tormaday. And of the grete aduentures. labeurs anguysshes/and many other grete dyseases of theym bothe to fore they myght atteyne for to come to the fynall conclusion of their desired loue/as a longe by the grace of god it shall be shewed in thistorye of thys present book/Bysechynge my sayd ladyes bountyouꝰ grace to receyue this lityll boke in gree of me her humble servaũt/and to pardoune me of the rude and comyn englyshe. where as shall be found faulte For I confesse me not lerned ne knowynge the arte of rhetoryk/ne of suche gaye termes as now be sayd in these dayes and vsed : And that shall suffyse. Besechyng Allmyghty god to graunte to her mooste noble goode grace longe lyffe/and thaccomplysshement of hir hihe noble and Joyes desires in thys present lyff : And after this short and transytorye lyff. euer lastynge lyff in heuen Amen/

ENEYDOS

After dyuerse werkes made/translated and achieued/hauyng noo werke in hande. I sittyng in my studye where as laye many dyuerse paunflettis and bookys. happened that to my hande came a lytyl booke in frenshe. whiche late was translated oute of latyn by some noble clerke of fraũce whiche booke is named Eneydos/made in latyn by that noble poete & grete clerke vyrgyle/whiche booke I sawe ouer and redde therin. How after the generall destruccyon of the grete Troye. Eneas departed berynge his olde fader anchises vpon his sholdres/his lityl son yolus on his honde. his wyfe wyth moche other people folowynge/and how he shypped and departed wyth alle thystorye of his aduentures that he had er he cam to the achieuement of his conquest of ytalye as all a longe shall be shewed in this present boke. In whiche booke I had grete playsyr. by cause of the fayr and honest termes & wordes in frenshe/ Whyche I neuer sawe tofore lyke. ne none so playsaunt ne so well ordred. whiche booke as me semed sholde be moche requysyte to noble men to see as wel for the eloquence as the historyes/How wel that many hondred yerys passed was the sayd booke of eneydos wyth other werkes made and lerned dayly in scolis specyally in ytalye & other places/whiche historye the sayd vyrgyle made in metre/And whan I had aduysed me in this sayd boke. I delybered and concluded to translate it in to englysshe And forthwyth toke a penne & ynke and wrote a leef or tweyne/whyche I ouersawe agayn to correcte it/And whã I sawe the fayr & straunge termes therin/I doubted that it sholde not please some gentylmen whiche late blamed me sayeng y^t in my translacyons I had ouer curyous termes whiche coude not be vnderstande of comyn peple/and desired me to vse olde and homely termes in my translacyons. and fayn wolde I satysfye euery man/ and so to doo toke an olde boke and redde therin/and certaynly the englysshe was so rude and brood that I coude not wele vnderstande it. And also my lord abbot of westmynster ded do shewe to me late certayn euydences wryton in olde englysshe for to reduce it in to our englysshe now vsid/And certaynly it was wreton in suche wyse that it was more lyke to dutche than englysshe I coude not reduce ne brynge it to be vnderstonden/And certaynly our langage now vsed varyeth ferre from that. whiche was vsed and spoken whan I was borne/ For we englysshe men/ben borne vnder the domynacyon of the mone. whiche is neuer stedfaste/but euer wauerynge/ wexynge one season/and waneth & dyscreaseth another season/And that comyn englysshe that is spoken in one shyre varyeth from another. In so moche that in my dayes happened that certayn marchaũtes were in a ship̃ in tamyse for to haue sayled ouer the see into zelande/and for lacke of wynde thei taryed atte forlond. and wente to lande for to refreshe them And one of theym named sheffelde a mercer cam into a hows and axed for mete. and specyally he axyd after eggys And the goode wyf answerde. that she coude speke no frenshe. And the merchaũt was angry. for he also coude speke no frenshe. but wolde haue hadde egges/and she vnderstode hym not/And thenne at laste a nother sayd that he wolde haue eyren/then the good wyf sayd that she vnderstod hym wel/ Loo what sholde a man in thyse dayes now wryte. egges or eyren/certaynly it is harde to playse euery man/by cause of dyuersite & chaũge of langage. For in these dayes euery man that is in ony reputacyon in his coũtre. wyll vtter his comynycacyon and maters in suche maners & termes/that fewe men shall vnderstonde theym/And som honest and grete clerkes haue ben wyth me and desired me to wryte the moste curyous termes that I coude fynde/And thus bytwene playn rude/& curyous I stande abasshed. but in my Iudgemente/the comyn termes that be dayli vsed ben lyghter to be vnderstonde than the olde and aũcyent englysshe/And for as moche as this present booke is not for a rude vplondyssh man to laboure therin/ne rede it/but onely for a clerke & a noble gentylman that feleth and vnderstondeth in faytes of armes in loue & in noble chyualrye/Therfor in a meane bytwene bothe I haue reduced & translated this sayd booke in to our englysshe not ouer rude ne curyous but in suche termes as shall be vnderstanden by goddys grace accordynge to my copye. and yf ony man wyll entermete in redyng of hit and fyndeth suche termes that he can not vnderstande late hym goo rede and lerne vyrgyll/or the pystles of ouyde/and ther he shall see and vnderstonde lyghtly all/Yf he haue a good redar and enformer/For this booke is not for euery rude and vnconnynge man to see/but to clerkys and very gentylmen that vnderstande gentylnes and scyence Thenne I praye alle theym that shall rede in this lytyl treatys to holde me for excused for the translatynge of hit. For I knowleche my selfe ignorant of connynge to enpryse on me so hie and noble a werke/But I praye mayster Iohn Skelton late created poete laureate in the vnyuersite of oxenforde to ouersee and correcte this sayd booke. And taddresse and expowne where as shalle be founde faulte to theym that shall requyre it. For hym I knowe for suffycyent to expowne and englysshe euery dyffyculte that is therin/ For he hath late translated the epystlys of Tulle/and the boke of dyodorus syculus. and diuerse other werkes oute of latyn in to englysshe not in rude and olde langage. but in polysshed and ornate termes craftely. as he that hath redde vyrgyle/ouyde. Tullye. and all the other noble poetes and oratours/to me vnknowen : And also he hath redde the ix. muses and vnderstande theyr musicalle scyences. and to whom of theym eche scyence is appropred. I suppose he hath dronken of Elycons well. Then I praye hym & soche other to correcte adde or mynysshe where as he or they shall fynde faulte/For I haue but folowed my copye in frenshe as nygh as me is possyble/And yf ony word be sayd therin well/I am glad. and yf otherwyse I submytte my sayd boke to theyr correctyon/Whiche boke I presente vnto the hye born my tocomynge naturell and souerayn lord Arthur by the grace of god Prynce of Walys Duc of Cornewayll. & Erle of Chester fyrst bygoten sone & heyer vnto our most dradde naturall and souerayn lorde & most crysten kynge/Henry the vij. by the grace of god kynge of Englonde and of Fraunce & lord of Jrelonde/bysechyng his noble grace to reseyue it in thanke of me his moste humble subget & seruaũt/And I shall praye vnto almyghty god for his prosperoꝰ encreasyng in vertue/ wysedom/ and humanyte that he may be egal wyth the most renõmed of alle his noble progenytours And so to lyue in this present lyf/that after this transitorye lyfe he and we alle may come to euerlastynge lyf in heuen/ Amen :

Here fynyssheth the boke yf Eneydos/compyled by vyrgyle/ whiche hath be translated oute of latyne in to frenshe/And oute of frenshe reduced in to englysshe by me wyllyam Caxton/ the xxij daye of Iuyn the yere of our lorde .M.iiijClxxxx. The fythe yere of the regne of kynge Henry the seuenth.

POLYCHRONICON

Grete thankynges lawde & honoure we merytoryously ben bounde to yelde and offre vnto wryters of hystoryes/whiche gretely haue prouffyted oure mortal lyf/that shewe vnto the reders and herers by the ensamples of thynges passyd/what thynge is to be desyred/And what is to be eschewed/For those thynges whiche oure progenytours by the taste of bytternes and experyment of grete Ieopardyes haue enseygned/ admonested and enformed vs excluded fro such peryllys/to knowe what is prouffytable to oure lyf/and acceptable/and what is vnprouffytable and to be refused/He is/and euer hath ben reputed the wysest/whiche by the experyence of aduerse fortune hath byholden and seen the noble Cytees/maners/and variaũt condycions of the people of many dyuerse Regyons/ For in hym is presupposed the lore of wysedome and polycye/ by the experyment of Jeopardyes and peryllys whiche haue growen of folye in diuerse partyes and contrayes/yet he is more fortunat/and may be reputed as wyse. yf he gyue attendaunce withoute tastynge of the stormes of aduersyte that may by the redyng of historyes conteynyng dyuerse customes Condycyons/lawes &/Actes of sondry nacions come vnto the knowleche of and vnderstandynge of the same wysedom and polycye/Jn whiche hystoryes so wreton in large and aourned volumes/he syttynge in his chambre or studye/maye rede/ knowe and vnderstande the polytyke and noble actes of alle the worlde as of one Cyte/And the conflyctes/errours. Troubles/& vexacions done in the said vniuersal worlde/Jn suche wyse as he had ben and seen them . in the propre places where as they were done/For certayne it is a greete beneurte vnto a man that can be reformed by other and straunge mennes hurtes and scathes/And by the same to knowe/what is requysyte and prouffytable for his lyf/And eschewe suche errours and Jnconuenytys by whiche other men haue ben hurte and lost theyr felycyte/Therfore the coũseylles of Auncyent and whyte heeryd men/in whome olde age hath engendryd wysedome/ben gretely preysed of yonger men/ And yet hystoryes soo moche more excelle them/As the dyuturnyte or length of tyme Includeth moo ensamples of thynges and laudable actes than thage of one man may suffyse to see/Historyes ought not only to be Iuged most proffytable to yonge men/whiche by the lecture/redyng & vnderstandyng make them semblable & equale to men of greter age/and to old men/to whome longe lyf hath mynystred experymentes of dyuerse thynges/but also thystoryes able & make ryght pryuate men digne & worthy to haue the gouernaũce of Empyres & noble Royammes historyes moeue and withdrawe Emperours and kynges fro vycious tyrannye/Fro vecordyous sleuthe/vnto tryumphe and vyctorye in puyssaunt bataylles/ Historyes also haue moeued ryght noble knyghtes to deserue eternal laude whiche foloweth them for their vyctoryous merytes/And cause them more valyantly to entre in Ieopardyes of batayles for the defence and tuicion of their countrey/and publyke wele/hystorye also affrayeth cruel tyrauntys for drede of Infamye and shame Infynyte/by cause of the detestable actes of suche cruel personnes ben oftymes plantyd and regystred in Chronykes vnto theyr perpetual obprobrye and dyuulgacion of theyr Jnfamie/As thactes of nero and suche other/Truly many of hye and couragyous men of grete empryse/desyryng theyr fame to be perpetuelly conseruyd by lyberal monumentis/whiche ben the permanente recordes of euery vyrtuouse and noble Acte/haue buylded and edyfyed ryall and noble Cytees/And for the conseruacion of the wele publycke haue mynystred and establysshed dyscrete and prouffytable lawes/And thus the pryncipal laude/and cause of delectable and amyable thynges/in whiche mannes felycyte stondeth and resteth ought and maye wel be attributed to hystoryes/whiche worde historye may be descryued thus/ Historye is a perpetuel conseruatryce of thoos thynges that haue be doone before this presente tyme/and also ã cotydyan witnesse of bienfayttes of malefaytes/grete Actes/and tryumphal vyctoryes of al maner peple . And also yf the terryble feyned Fables of Poetes haue moche styred and moeued men to pyte/and conseruynge of Justyce/How moche more is to be supposed/that Historye assertryce of veryte/and as moder of alle philosophye/moeuynge our maners to vertue/reformeth and reconcyleth ner hande alle thoos men/whiche thurgh the Infyrmyte of oure mortal nature hath ledde the mooste parte of theyr lyf in Ocyosyte and myspended theyr tyme passed ryght soone oute of Remembraunce/Of whiche lyf and deth is egal oblyuyon/

The fruytes of vertue ben Inmortall/Specially whanne they ben wrapped in the benefyce of hystoryes/

Thenne it muste folowe/that it is mooste fayre to men Mortalle to suffre labours and payne/for glorye and fame Jmmortalle/Hercules when he lyued suffryd greete laboures and peryllys wylfully puttyng hym self in many terryble and ferdful ieopardyes to obteyne of all peple the benefaytes of Immortal laude & renommee/We rede of other noble men/ somme lordes & somme other of lower astates reputed as goddes in dyuerse regyons/the whoos famous actes/and excellent vertues only hystorye hath preseruyd fro perysshyng in eternal memorye/Other monymentes distributed in dyuerse chaunges/enduren but for a short tyme or season/But the vertu of historye dyffused & spredd by the vnyuersal worlde hath tyme/whiche consumeth all other thynges as conseruatryce and kepar of her werke/Ferthermore eloquence is soo precious and noble/that almooste noo thyng can be founden more precious than it/By Eloquence the grekes ben preferryd in contynuel honour to fore the rude barbares/Oratours and lerned clerkes in like wise excelle vnlerned and brutyssh peple/Syth this eloquence is suche that causeth men emonge them self somme texcelle other/after the qualyte of the vertue and eloquence be seyn to be of valew/For somme we Iuge to be goode men digne of laude/whiche shewe to vs the waye of vertue/and other haue taken another waye for tenflamme more the courages of men by fables of poesye/than to prouffyte And by the lawes and Institutes more to punysshe than to teche Soo that of thyse thynges the vtylyte is myxt with harme/For somme sothly techyth to lye/But historye representynge the thynges lyke vnto the wordes/embraceth of vtylyte & prouffite Jt sheweth honeste/and maketh vyces detestable/It enhaunceth noble men and depresseth wicked men and fooles/Also thynges that historye descryueth by experyence/moche prouffyten vnto a ryghtful lif/Thenne syth historye is so precious & also prouffytable/J haue delybered to wryte twoo bookes notable/retenyng in them many noble historyes/as the lyues/myracles/passyons and deth of dyuerse hooly payntes whiche shal be comprysed by thayde and suffraunce of almyghty god in one of them/whiche is named legenda aurea/that is the golden legende/And that other book is named polycronycon/in whiche book ben comprised briefly many wonderful historyees/Fyrst the descripcion of the vniuersal world/as wel in lengthe as in brede with the diuisiōs of coūtrees royāmes & empyres/the noble cytees/hye moūtaynes famous ryuers/merueyelles & wondres/& also the historial Actes & wōderful dedes syth the fyrst makyng of heuen & erth vnto the begynnyng of the regne of kyng edward the fourth/& vnto the yere of our lord M/CCCClx. As by thayde of almyghty god shal folowe al a longe/after the composynge & gaderynge of dan Ranulph monke of chestre fyrste auctor of this book/and afterward englisshed by one Treuisa vycarye of barkley/which atte request of one Sir thomas lord barkley translated this sayd book/the byble & bartylmew de proprietatibus rerū out of latyn into englyssh/And now at this tyme symply emprynted & sette in forme by me William Caxton and a lytel embelysshed fro tholde makyng/and also haue added suche storyes as I coude fynde fro thende that the said Ranulph fynysshed his book which was the yere of our lord .M.CCClvij vnto the yere of the same MCCCClx whiche ben an honderd & thre yere/whiche werke J haue finysshed vnder the noble protection of my most drad naturel and souerayne lord and moost cristen kynge/kyng Edward the fourth/humbly besechyng his moost noble grace to pardone me yf ony thynge be sayd therynne of Ignoraūce/or other wyse than it ought to be . And also requyryng al other to amende wher as ther is defaute/wherin he or they may deserue thank & meryte/And J shal praye for them that soo doo/For

I knowleche myn Ignoraunce and also symplenes/And yf ther be thyng that may plese or prouffite ony man/I am glad that J haue achieued it/And folowynge this my prohemye I shal set a table shortly towchyd of the moost parte of this book/ And where the sayd Auctor hath alle his werke in seuen bookes/J haue sette that whiche J haue added to after a parte. and haue marked it the laste booke/and haue made chapytres accordyng to the other werke/Of whiche accomplysshyng/J thanke Almyghty God To whome be gyuen Honour/laude/ and glorye/in secula seculorum Amen/

Deo gracias

(Following Trevisa's colophon to Higden's seventh book Caxton added):

Thus endeth the book named Proloconycon made & compiled by Ranulph monk of chestre/whiche ordeyned it in latyn & atte request of the ryght worshipful lord/Thomas lord of berkeley it was translated in to englisshe by one Treuisa thenne vycarye of the Paryssh of barkley/And for as moche as syth the accomplysshemente of this sayd booke made by the sayd Ranulph ended the yere of our lord a /M/CCC/lvij/ many thynges haue fallen whiche ben requysyte to be added to this werke/by cause mennes wyttes in this tyme ben oblyuyous and lyghtly forgeten many thynges dygne to be putte in memorye/and also there can not be founden in these dayes but fewe that wryte in theyr regystres suche thynges as dayly happen and falle. Therfore J William Caxton a symple persone haue endeuoyred me to wryte fyrst ouer all the sayd book of proloconycon/and som what haue chaunged the rude and old englyssh/that is to wete certayn wordes/which in these dayes be neither vsyd ne vnderstanden/& furthermore haue put it in emprynte to thende that it maye be had & the maters therin cõprised to be knowen/for the boke is general touchyng shortly many notable maters/& also am auysed to make another booke after this sayd werke whiche shal be sett here after the same/And shal haue his chapytres & his table aparte For J dar not presume to sette my booke ne ioyne hit to his/for dyuerse causes/one is for as moche as I haue not ne can gete no bokes of auctoryte treatyng of suche chronykes/ except a lytel boke named fasciculus temporum/and another callyd Aureus de vniuerso/in whiche bookes J fynde ryght lytel mater syth the sayd tyme/And another cause is/for as moche as my rude symplenesse and ignorant makyng ought not to be compared/set ne ioyned to his boke/Thenne J shal by the grace of god set my werke after a parte for to accomplysshe the yeres syth that he fynysshed his book/vnto the yere of our lord/M/CCCC/lx/and the fyrst yere of the Regne of kyng edward the fourthe/whiche amoũte to an honderd and thre yere/

Incipit Liber vltimus

Thenne folowyng this fore wreton booke of Prolicronycon J haue emprysed to ordeyne this newe booke by the suffraunce of Almyghty god to contynue the sayd werk bryefly/And to sette in hystoriall thynges/suche as J haue conne gete/from the tyme that he lefte/that was in the yere of oure lord a thousand thre honderde and seuen and fyfty vnto the yere of our sayd lord thousand four honderd and syxty and to the fyrst yere of the regne of kynge Edward the fourth/

And here J make an ende of this lytel werke as nygh as J can fynde after the forme of the werk to fore made by Ranulph monk of Chestre/And where as ther is fawte/J beseche them that shal rede it to correcte it/For yf J coude haue founden moo storyes/J wold haue sette in hit moo/but the substaunce that J can fynde and knowe J haue shortly sette hem in this book. to thentente that such thynges as haue ben done syth the deth or ende of the sayd boke of polycronycon shold be had in remembraunce and not putte in oblyuyon ne forgetynge/prayenge all them that shall see this symple werke to pardone me of my symple/and rude wrytynge/Ended the second day of Juyll the xxij yere of the regne of kyng Edward the fourth & of the Incarnacion of our lord a thousand four honderd foure score and tweyne/

Fynysshed per Caxton

LYF OF OUR LADY

This book was compyled by dan Iohn lydgate monke of burye/at the excitacion and styryng of the noble and victoryous prynce/kyng harry the fyfthe/in thonoure glorye &

reuerence of the byrthe of our moste blessyd lady/mayde wyf/ and moder of our lord Jhesu chryst chapytred as foloweth by this table

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Here endeth the book of the lyf of our lady made by dan John Lydgate monke of bury/at thynstaunce of the moste chrysten kynge/kyng harry the fyfth

(The stanzas that follow are—according to Blades—doubtless a specimen of Caxton's own powers of versification.)

Goo lityl book and submytte the
Unto al them/that the shal rede
Or here/prayeng hem for charite
To pardon me of the rudehede
Of myn enpryntyng/not takyng hede
And yf ought be doon to theyr plesyng
Say they thyse balades folowyng

Sancte & individue trinitati/Jhesu cristi crucifixi humanitati gloriose beate marie virgini/sit sempiterna gloria/ab omni creatura/per Infinita seculorum secula/ Amen

Unto the holy and undeuyded trynyte
Thre persones in one veray godhede
To Jhesu christ crucefyed humanyte
And to our blessyd ladyes maydenhede
Be gevyn laude and glorye in veray dede
Of euery creature/what someuer he be
World withouten ende/amen say al we

Benedictum sit dulcissime nomen Jhesu cristi/& gloriosissimi marie matris eius ineternum & vltra Nos cum prole pia benedicat virgo maria Amen

Blessid be the swettest name of our lord
Jhesu christ/and most glorious marie
His blessyd moder/with eternal accord
More than euer/tendure in glorye
And with hir meke sone for memorye
Blesse vs marie/the most holy virgyne
That we regne in heuen with the ordres nyne

Enprynted by Wyllyam Caxton

THE FOUR SONS OF AYMON

(From Copland's 1554 edition—prologue evidently a reprint of Caxton's.)

As the Philosopher in the fyrst booke of hys metaphysyque sayth that every man naturally desireth to know and to con newe thynges : And therfore haue the Clerkes & peple of great vnderstandynge desyred and concite to lerned sciences and to know vertues of thinges. Some by Phylosophy, other by Poetrye, and other by Historyes and cronikes of thynges passed. And vpõ these three they haue greatly laboured in suche that thanked be God, by theyr good dylygence and laboures : they haue had greate knowledge by innumerable volumes of bookes, whiche haue be made and compyled by great studye and payne vnto this day. And by cause that aboue all thinges the princes and lordes of hie estate and entendement desyre to see thystoryes of the ryght noble and hye vertues of the predecessours whiche ben digne, and worthy of remembraunce of perpetuall recommendation. Therfore late at y^e^ request and commaundement of the ryght noble and vertus Erle John Erle of Oxeforde my good synguler and especial lorde I reduced and translated out of Frenche into our maternall and Englyshe tongue the lyfe of one of his predecessours named Robert Erle of Oxeforde tofore sayd w^t^ diuerse and many great myracles whiche God shewed for him as wel in his lyfe as after his death, as it is shewed all a longe in his sayde booke. And also that my sayd Lorde desyreth to haue other Hystories of olde tyme passed of vertues chyualry reduced in lykewyse into our Englishe tõgue : he late sent to me a booke in Frenche conteynyng thactes and faytes of warre doone and made agaynst y^e^ great Emperour and king of Fraunce Charlemayne, by y^e^ .iiii. sonnes of Aymon, Whyche booke accordynge to his request I haue endeuorde me to accomplyshe and to reduce it into our englyshe, to my great coste and charges as in the translatinge as in enprynting of the same, hopyng & not doubtyng but that hys good grace shall rewarde me in suche wise that I shall haue cause to pray for his good and prosperus welfare. And besechynge his said noble good grace to pardon me of y^e^ rude and this simple work For accordyng to the coppy whyche he sẽt to me I have folowed as nigh as I can, and where as as any defaute shall be founde I submyt me to the correccion of them that vnderstande the cronycle & hystory, besethyng thẽ to correcte it & amende there as they shall fynde faute. And I shall praye almighty God for them that so doo to rewarde them in suche wyse that after this shorte and transytory lyfe we may all come to euerlastyng lyfe in heuen. Amen.

PARIS AND VIENNE

Here begynneth thystorye of the noble ryght valyaunt & worthy Knyght Parys/and of the fayr Vyẽne the daulphyns doughter of vyennoys/the whyche suffred many aduersytees bycause of theyr true loue or they coude enioye the effect therof of eche other/

Thus endeth thystorye of the noble and valyaunt knyght parys/and the fayr vyenne doughter of the doulphyn of vyennoys/translated out of frensshe into englysshe by wylliam Caxton at westmestre fynysshed the last day of August the yere of our lord MCCCClxxxv/and enprynted the xix day of decembre the same yere/and the fyrst yere of the regne of kyng Harry the seuenth/

Explicit ꝑ Caxton

FIFTEEN OES

Epilogue.

Thiese prayers tofore wreton ben enprĩted bi the cõmaũdementes of the moste hye & vertuous pryncesse our liege ladi Elizabeth by the grace of god Quene of Englonde & of Fraũce. & also of the right hye & most noble pryncesse Margarete Moder vnto our souerayn lorde the kyng/&c

By their most humble subget and servaũt William Caxton

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